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IRISH 1798 COLLECTION

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

FRENCH INVASION

OF

IRELAND.

A

NARRATIVE

OF WHAT PASSED AT

KILLALLA,

IN THE COUNTY OF MAYO,

AND THE PARTS ADJACENT,

DURING THE FRENCH INVASION IN THE SUMMER OF 1798.

BY AN EYEWITNESS.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY; AND R. BALDWIN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1800.

PRICE ONLY 2s. 6d.

[*H. Baldwin and Son, Printers, New Bridge-Street, London.*]

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TO

THE PRINTER.

SIR,

AS I know that inaccurate accounts of remarkable events must at length be taken for true, and be adopted by the historian, if he is not supplied with better, I feel myself drawn against my liking, by the very imperfect narratives I have yet seen of what passed at Killalla, while foreign and domestic enemies possessed that town in the summer of 1798, to state to you as much as fell under my observation at that critical period.

The Committee of United Irishmen at Paris had certainly prepared both the Directory and the majority of the French people to expect, that if a strong force from France should appear on the coast of Ireland, the whole country would presently rise in arms to second them, and to shake off the detested yoke of Great-Britain. Colonel Charost confessed as much to the Bishop of Killalla in private conversation, and owned that he was

much disappointed when he came to discover how extremely different the reports of the Irish Commissioners were from the truth, particularly with regard to the Protestants and the people of property in Ireland. He added, with much warmth, that he would take care to open the eyes of his countrymen on the subject, as soon as he should return to Paris.

The inconsiderable number of French, who made good a landing at Killalla, were destined to be only the vanguard of that army so happily intercepted afterwards by Sir John B. Warren. Had these last succeeded in their enterprise as well as did their forerunners, and arrived in time to support them, the danger to the English interest in Ireland would have proved serious indeed, if we may form a conclusion from the mischief which even a handful of foreigners was able to effect. But the hand of Providence interposed in our favour. Money to set forward the second embarkation was wanting; so that before that grand spring of military operation could be put in motion, the first invaders had miscarried by land, leaving the second armament to fall a prey to a gallant English squadron.

On the fourth of August, 1798, the French Government dispatched from Rochelle, in two fri-

gates of 44 guns 18-pounders, and one of 38 carrying 12-pounders, a force of 1030 men and 70 officers, the whole under the command of General Humbert. This officer had risen from the ranks, was first distinguished for his activity in the ruinous war of La Vendée, and had been second in command in the expedition of General Hoche to Bantry Bay, in December 1796. The squadron, eluding beyond their own expectation, the vigilance of our fleet, had fetched so long a compass on their route, as to be eighteen days in their passage to Ireland. Their intention was to land, as the second party afterwards did, in Donegal; but after beating up three days against a north wind, they cast anchor on the 22d of August in the Bay of Killalla, taking care to deceive their enemies by shewing only English colours. The feint succeeded so well, that two sons of the Bishop of Killalla, eager to see English men of war, threw themselves into a fishing boat, along with the port-surveyor, Mr. James Rutledge, and were presently surprised to find themselves prisoners. Edwin Stock, the eldest son of the Bishop, was brought on shore that evening by the French, who wanted him for an interpreter: the other two got away, three days after, to Ballina, where they joined the party that charged the ene-

my near that town on horseback, on whose defeat they contrived to slip away on foot to Killalla.

Some alarm had been given in the morning of the 22d to the people of Killalla, by the unusual appearance of ships of that size in their bay; insomuch that the only Magistrate of the town, William Kirkwood, Esq. who commanded the yeomanry, had kept his corps under arms the whole day at the See-house, called the Castle, as did also Lieutenant Sills, of the Prince of Wales's Fencibles his twenty militia-men, lately detached to Killalla from Ballina. Yeomen and fencibles together formed a corps of fifty men, all Protestants, equally resolute and loyal, as the event would have made manifest, if they had not been opposed to a force so very superior in number.

The indentings of the bay of Killalla, and the chain of hills between that town and the spot where the enemy landed, will in part account for the secrecy with which the debarkation was conducted. It is not without reason, however, suspected, that the peasantry had no intention to prevent the surprise that took place. Even among the Bishop's servants, for some days before this event, a whisper had gone about, that the French were coming to Killalla, and that something very terrible would shortly happen. A Protestant servant

vant maid, lately married to a Romish inhabitant of the place, had circulated the report in the castle with great apparent uneasiness and conviction of its truth.

Thursday, the 23d of August, had been fixed on for the visitation of the clergy of the united dioceses of Killalla and Achonry, to be held at Killalla. The town not affording a decent inn, it had been customary for the Bishop to find bed and board for such clergymen as came from distant parts, three or four of whom had accordingly dined at the castle, in company with two officers of the carabineers, quartered at Ballina, a town six miles distant. The company was preparing to join the ladies, between seven and eight on a fine summer's evening, when a terrified messenger entered the room with news, that the French were landed, and that near 300 of them were within a mile of the town. The cavalry officers rode off directly, in full speed, with the intelligence to Ballina. In a few minutes the yeomen and fencibles being drawn together before the castle gate, the question was put, should they fight or retreat? 'we will fight,' said Lieutenant Sills, listening to the dictates of courage rather than of prudence. The word was echoed by the whole corps. They advanced into the main street, which stands at right angles with the

the castle, where they met the French advance guard, as it was entering the town from the other end. Borne down by numbers, and seeing two of their body killed, our people were seized with a panic, and fled, leaving their Captain, Kirkwood, to stand near fifty shots before he was taken.—Lieutenant Sills, retreating into the castle, was presently obliged to render himself prisoner to General Humbert, who sent him away the next day to the ships, to be carried to France. The reason of the distinction made between the treatment of this officer and that of Captain Kirkwood, was, because Sills was not only an officer of fencibles, but an Englishman, whom the French upon all occasions affected to discriminate from the natives of a country, to which they were come to offer the valuable gift of liberty. One of the Bishop's guests, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ellison, of Castlebar, having been formerly an officer in the army, felt his military ardour revive with the news of the enemy's approach; he bravely shouldered a musquet with the yeomen, stood the first fire in the street, and was one of the last that retreated to the castle, after receiving a hurt in the heel from a spent ball. The Bishop, having seen the yeomen and fencibles collected for opposing the enemy, had retired into his garden to arm his mind

mind for the emergency, whence he heard the vollies in the street, as if they were close at his ears.

Of our yeomen, about nineteen were secured by the French, and ordered into close custody at the castle. The room chosen for their prison was the drawing-room, the best apartment in the house, where they were detained three or four days, without permission to go out even for the occasions of nature. Yet the honest poor men took all possible pains to avoid injuring the room or furniture; so that, when they were at length sent off to Ballina, it was found no difficult matter to set all to rights again in that apartment.

All opposition being now at an end, the French General marched into the castle-yard at the head of his officers, and demanded to see Mons. l'Evêque. Very fortunately for his family, and indeed, as it afterwards appeared, for the town and neighbourhood, the Bishop was tolerably fluent in the French language, having in his youth had the advantage of foreign travel. Humbert desired him to be under no apprehension; himself and all his people ſhould be treated with respectful attention, and nothing should be taken by the French troops but what was absolutely necessary for their support: a promise which, as long as those troops continued in Killalla, was *most religiously observed*,

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excepting only a small sally of ill humour or roughness on the part of the Commander towards the Bishop, which ſhall be related presently.

In the midst of all his hurry in giving the necessary orders for landing the remainder of his force, and appointing their quarters, General Humbert found time that very evening to enter into a pretty long conversation with the Bishop on the object of this invasion, and the sanguine hopes he entertained of its speedy and complete success. Such a powerful armament was to be sent out without delay from the French ports to second this primary adventure, that not a doubt could in reason subsist, but Ireland would be a free and happy nation, under the protection of France, within the space of a month. A Directory was immediately to be set up in the province of Connaught, some of the Members of which were already appointed; but there was still a place for a person of the ability and consequence of the Bishop of Killalla, if he chose to embrace the fortunate opportunity, at once of serving himself, and liberating his country. The Bishop at that time made no answer, except by a bow to the personal compliment; but when the application was afterwards seriously repeated to him in their common bedchamber by the two principal officers, Humbert

and

and Serrasin, he smiled, and said he had taken too many oaths of allegiance to his Sovereign to have it in his power to change. They replied, he was a man of honour, and that it was far from the intention of their Government to force liberty upon any man.

The remainder of the first evening was employed in a strict examination of Captain Kirkwood, the magistrate, as to the supplies that could be drawn from the town and neighbourhood to assist the progress of the invaders. The queries were interpreted by some Irish officers who came with the French. Mr. Kirkwood answered with such an appearance of frankness and candour, that he gained the esteem of the French General, who told him he was on his parole, and should have full permission to return to his family, and attend to his private affairs. But this good humour between them did not continue long. Kirkwood had a sickly wife, an amiable woman, of whom he was doatingly fond. The terror of the invasion wrought so upon her weak nerves, that, after escaping on the first night to the castle, she crept away the day after to some hiding place in the mountains, four or five miles from the town, from which she sent word to her husband that she was but just alive. Attentive only to her, he forgot

his

his parole of honour to the French; and it was not till after he had been some time by his wife's bedside, that he recollected the circumstance of his having transgressed the bounds within which he had promised to confine himself. Not knowing what punishment he might have incurred by this breach of the laws of war, he took the desperate resolution of withdrawing himself to the wild district of Erris, about ten miles from Killalla, on the sea-coast, into which a carriage cannot pass, as it is a frightful tract of bog and mountain, though tolerably well peopled. Here he remained several days with only one attendant, in constant dread of being robbed and murdered by the rebels, and forced to take up his residence at night in caves among the rocks, when he could not reach a smoky hut belonging to some peasant whom he could trust. At one time especially, he owed his life to the good offices of Ferdinand O'Donnel, a young man, a tenant under the see of Killalla, who was soon to make a conspicuous figure in these troubles. O'Donnel had been employed in some little post in the revenue at Cork, whence he had lately returned to his own country, to look after his small farm, and to take care of his mother, a young brother, and sisters. He knew Mr. Kirkwood; as indeed no man was better

known

known nor more popular in all that neighbourhood, being a good-humoured man, well versed in the Irish language, and useful as a merchant conducting an extensive trade between Killalla and the Irish and English ports. With difficulty O'Donnel was able to protect the fugitive for one night only in his farm-house; but he incurred the hatred of the rebels so much by this act of humanity, that after sending away Kirkwood in the morning, he was fain to take the road to Killalla himself the same day. It is more than probable, however, that he was glad of the pretence for running to the scene of action, where his vanity whispered him, that he should find occasion to distinguish himself. Kirkwood soon after, by the help of a trusty Protestant of the name of Rogers, contrived to make his situation known to the Bishop, who represented the business to the French officers in such a light, as proceeding merely from inadvertence, that a passport was granted, in consequence of which, Mr. Kirkwood, after many intervening perils, found means to get back to Killalla. There he had reason to mourn over the ill consequences of the hasty step he had taken, when he quitted the defence of his house and property. Enraged at his breach of parole, the French had taken every thing they wanted out of his stores,

oats

oats and salt and iron to a considerable amount; nor had they been careful to prevent depredations by the rebels in his dwelling-house, as they would have done if he had not fled; so that when he returned, he found it almost a wreck. But it is time to look back to what happened at the castle, in the commencement of the invasion.

For a century past Ireland had known nothing of the horrors of war, but from description. Our obscure corner of the island had less reason than almost any other part to look for a disturbance from foreign enemies. Neither was there just cause of suspicion, that the county of Mayo, at least, had caught any portion of that malignant spirit of disloyalty and religious intolerance, the effects of which in the county of Wexford, we in Connaught had been lately deploring, not without a mixture of gratulation on our own escape from the like. It is not to be wondered, therefore, if taken in the midst of profound security, the inhabitants were seized with a panic, as general as it was terrible.

The dining-room at the castle, which a few minutes before witnessed nothing but mirth and festivity, was filled immediately, from one end to the other, with French officers and soldiers, dragging in arms and baggage, with prisoners undergoing

going examination; and in one part with a surgeon and assistants dressing a severe wound received in the late skirmish by a surly looking officer of the French grenadiers. All the lower part of the house, together with the court-yard and offices, was occupied by the soldiery, to the number of at least three hundred. And here it would be an act of great injustice to the excellent discipline constantly maintained by these invaders while they remained in our town, not to remark, that with every temptation to plunder, which the time and the number of valuable articles within their reach presented to them, from a sideboard of plate and glasses, a hall filled with hats, whips, and great coats, as well of the guests as of the family, not a single particular of private property was found to have been carried away, when the owners, after the first fright was over, came to look for their effects, which was not for a day or two after the landing. Immediately upon entering the dining-room, a French officer had called for the Bishop's butler, and gathering up the spoons and glasses, had desired him to take them to his pantry.

On the middle floor of the new house, the drawing-room, as I said, was converted into a prison for the yeomen, till they were sent on the 26th to Ballina,

lina, when it returned to the possession of the family. A store-room on the same floor was left undisturbed; the two bed-chambers adjoining were reserved for the general and his principal officers. The attic story, containing a library and three bed-chambers, continued sacred to the bishop and his family. And so scrupulous was the delicacy of the French not to disturb the female part of the house, that not one of them was ever seen to go higher than the middle floor, except on the evening of their success at Castlebar, when two officers begged leave juſt to carry to the family the news of the battle, and seemed a little mortified that the intelligence was received with an air of dissatisfaction.*

It is not easy by any force of language to convey an adequate idea of the miseries of that first night, which succeeded to the landing of the enemy. To the terrified imaginations of the town's people, the

* One of these officers observed to a brother officer in the town, who interpreted for him in the house where he lodged, that "there was no hope of attaching the Bishop's family to their cause, for that while he was announcing the victory at Castlebar, he could see despair painted in their faces." It was some time before the French could believe that no Protestant would join them. The only persons of the established church that did so, were two drunken sots of Killalla, who thinking apostacy the fittest prelude to treason, before they embraced the French party, did first publicly declare themselves converts to the church of Rome.

castle

castle instantly presented itself, as the only place where they could have a chance of safety. Thither accordingly they fled, without distinction of age, sex, or condition, forcing their way into every corner of the house and offices, occupying the stair-cases, spreading through the bed-chambers, and some of them even thrusting themselves and their children into the same beds with the infants of the Bishop's family. Women that had lain sick in their beds for a month before, and one old lady past eighty, who was bed-rid, and believed to be at the point of death, gathering strength from despair, contrived to work their way to the very top of the house. Chairs were placed round the lobby of the attic story, on which the family, with some of their principal acquaintance, remained without a thought of repose for the whole night. Indeed the leaden hand of sleep could not have closed any eye-lids but those of an infant. The whole house resounded like a bedlam with the loquacity of the Frenchmen below, and the shrieks and groans of the fugitives above. Among the last there wanted not some, who sought consolation from the whiskey bottle, in consequence of which they became presently so clamorous and troublesome, that it was found necessary to restrain them by force.

Of the company that had dined at the castle that

that day, two clergymen made their escape on foot, and gained the neighbouring mountains, leaving their horses to be seized by the French. The Dean of Killalla, (parish minister of the town) the Rev. Thomas Thompson, brought his wife and children from his own dwelling to the castle, where they were sheltered with the cordiality due to the uncommon excellence of their character, and continued there till a gracious Providence wrought our deliverance. The Bishop had every reason to rejoice, that in his distress he should have been so fortunate as to be assisted by the judgment, the steadiness, and temper of Dean Thompson and Doctor Ellison. This last gentleman indeed continued with him but one week, being dismissed on his parole to Castlebar; but wherever he was, the Bishop felt the beneficial effects of his active and friendly disposition. The Rev. Robert Nixon, curate of the parish, a most worthy and valuable young man, was also an inmate at the castle during the whole time of the troubles. The Rev. Mr. Little, from the neighbouring parish of Lackan, embraced the same asylum, after he had been driven from his parsonage by the insurgents, who left him neither house nor property. The Bishop's own family consisted of himself, his lady, his sister-in-law, Mrs. Cope, the Rev.

Rev. James Burrowes (private tutor) a young nephew, and eleven children.* The servants were thirteen in number.

The two ladies, who had the principal direction of a family of this size, will naturally attract attention. Curiosity will be excited to inquire in what manner they conducted themselves under the impression of a reverse of fortune so terrifying, and so utterly unexpected. As the present narrative belongs more properly to the class of private history than of public, the Reader may be assured his desire of information in this particular should have been gratified, had it been possible to satisfy it without hurting the feelings of the parties concerned. Female heroism shrinks away from the meed of human praise; because it most commonly inherits the temper of its natural parent, piety; that chaste though ardent piety, which would gladly hide itself from the notice of every being, except the Supreme. Let it be sufficient to observe, that the power of religion to chase away from minds rightly imbued

Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
Par. L. I. 558.

was never more completely exemplified than in the

* Mrs. Stock had four other children abroad, two married daughters, and two officers serving in the army.

whole behaviour, during their sharp trial, of those very persons, whose entreaties have restrained my pen from doing them justice.

On the morning after his arrival, Humbert began his military operations by pushing forwards to Ballina a detachment of a hundred men, forty of whom he had mounted on the best horses he could lay his hands upon in the country. On the road he concealed under the arch of a bridge, adjoining to Killalla, a serjeant's guard, to watch the motions of any straggling party from the enemy; a measure of prudence which proved fatal to the Rev. George Fortescue (nephew to Lord Clermont) a clergyman of the Diocese, of the fairest character. This young gentleman, who had been enrolled in his brother's troop, in the county of Louth, had put himself at the head of a reconnoitring party from Ballina, and falling in with the ambuscade, received a wound in his groin, of which he died in great agonies, but with the most exemplary patience and resignation about nine days after. The carabineers and yeomanry of Ballina, after a short resistance, consulted their safety by flight, leaving the town and one of their company, in the hands of the French, a Newport cavalier, who was surprised in his bed before he had time to escape.

The person of this prisoner chancing to be large and corpulent, General Humbert chose to make a publick exhibition of him, as the *spolia opima* of his victory. Placing him therefore in his uniform, at his left hand, in a curricle drawn by two handsome horses, late the property of poor Mr. Fortescue, the General rode back from Ballina into Killalla in triumph, amidst the acclamations of a great crowd of peasantry, as well as of his army. The indolent captive, as he carried his eyes quietly round the throng, looked not unlike a sea-lion just awaked out of his sleep.

In war, it is said, the first sussess is every thing. The maxim was at least verified here, by the instant accession of many hundreds of the country people to the cause of the French, which they affected to style the cause of Ireland and Liberty. A green flag was mounted over the castle gate, with the inscription ERIN GO BRAGH, importing, as I am told, *Ireland for ever!* This flag was the signal to invite as many as had the spirit to assert their freedom to join a brave people, who were come for no other purpose but to make them independent and happy. The generous purpose was to be forwarded by the immediate delivery of arms, ammunition, and clothing, to the new levies of the country. Property was to be inviola-

ble. Ready money was to come over in the ships expected every day from France. In the mean time, whatever was brought in voluntarily, or taken by necessity to answer the occasions of the army, should be punctually paid for in drafts on the future Directory, of which the owners of the goods demanded were courteously invited to accept. For the first two or three days many people did apply for such drafts to the French commissary of stores, whose whole time appeared to be taken up with writing them. Indeed the Bishop himself was of opinion, that the losers would act wisely to accept of them; not, as he told the people, that they would ever produce payment where it was promised, but because they might serve as documents to our own government, when at a future period it should come to inquire into the losses sustained by its loyal subjects. The trouble however of the commissary, in issuing drafts on a bank in prospect, was not of long duration. The people smiled first, and he joined in the smile himself at last, when he offered the airy security.

But if cash was wanting, the promise of clothing and arms to the recruits was made good on the spot, and to a considerable extent. Chests, containing each forty fusils, and others filled with new

French

French uniforms, and gaudy helmets, being heaped together in the castle yard, the first that offered their service, received complete clothing; and these, by credible report, were about a thousand in number. The next comers, who were at least as many, had every thing but shoes and stockings. To the last, arms only were given. And of arms Colonel Charost assured the Bishop not less than 5500 stand were in this place delivered out to the insurgents. The musquets were pronounced, by those who were judges of them, to be well fabricated, though their bore was too small to admit English bullets. The carabines were remarkable for their goodness. Swords and pistols, of which there was no great plenty, were reserved as marks of distinction, to be distributed only to the rebel officers.

It was a melancholy spectacle to those in the castle, to witness the eagerness with which the unfortunate rustics pressed forward to lay hold of these fatal trappings, the sure harbingers of their own speedy destruction. A very little penetration was required to discover the madness of expecting final success in an enterprise, conducted by such a force, against an army, at that time in the kingdom, of probably not less than a hundred thousand men. But though the bait was visible to

people

people of any sense, to the multitude it certainly was in no small degree alluring.

The uncombed, ragged peasant, who had never before known the luxury of shoes and stockings, now washed, powdered, and full dressed, was metamorphosed into another being, the rather because the far greater part of these mountaineers were by no means deficient either in size or person. 'Look at these poor fellows', said Humbert with an air of triumph to the Bishop, 'they are 'made, you find, of the same stuff with ourselves.' A still stronger temptation offered itself, to people unaccustomed to animal food, in a full enjoyment of fresh meat. The lowest allowance of beef for a day was one pound to each recruit. This was devoured with an avidity, that excited sometimes the mirth, sometimes the contempt of their French associates. An officer protested, that having for curiosity trusted an Irishman at once with an allowance of eight pounds of dressed meat, he saw the creature throw himself on the ground, and begin to gnaw it so eagerly, that he was sure he would not rise till he had consumed it.

The expectation of spoil undoubtedly came in for a full share of the inducements, that prompted the indigent to shake off the restraints of civil rule, and armed him against his wealthy neighbours.

bours. It is a debt due to justice, however, to observe, that if the first who joined the enemy were enticed by hope to a foreign standard, very many took the same road afterwards, merely through fear. Great pains were employed by the early insurgents to frighten their neighbours into the same inclosure of peril with themselves, partly by the most horrid menaces in case of refusal to join the common cause, and partly by spreading lies of the protestants, whom they represented as Orangemen, universally bent on the excision of catholics.

When the united weight of so many temptations is duly estimated, operating besides on a body of peasantry already estranged from their protestant neighbours by difference of religion, language, and education, it will rather be matter of surprise, that so little mischief was the result of the insurrection in Connaught, and that we had not the same horrid scenes of cruelty and religious intolerance to mourn over, as had lately stamped indelible disgrace on the eastern province. It is a circumstance worthy of particular notice, that during the whole time of this civil commotion, not a drop of blood was shed by the Connaught rebels, except in the field of war. It is true, the example and influence of the French went a great

way

way to prevent sanguinary excesses. But it will not be deemed fair to ascribe to this cause alone the forbearance of which we were witnesses, when it is considered, what a range of country lay at the mercy of the rebels for several days after the French power was known to be at an end.

These reflections are offered to the public as an apology for the opinion of certain persons, who became advocates for lenity, when, on the suppression of the rebellion, the treatment due to the insurgents was the object of discussion. Fire and sword was the language of gentlemen, whose loss by the war, though grievous and highly provoking, was only the loss of property. Milder sentiments may reasonably be allowed to have place in bosoms, which had throbbed with the apprehension of a greater mischief than spoliation. Experience had taught them, that life is the first of worldly possessions; and having saved that blessing themselves, they could not be in haste to ravish it from others.

Indeed where there had appeared all along so few traces of rancour in these poor country folk, it was impossible for a spectator of their actions not to pity them for their very simplicity. It was such, that even the serious situation in which we were placed was frequently insufficient to repress our laughter

laughter at it. The coxcombry of the young clowns in their new dress; the mixture of good-humour and contempt in the countenances of the French, employed in making puppies of them; the haste of the undressed to be as fine as their neighbours, casting away their old clothes long before it came to their turn to receive the new; above all, the merry activity of a handsome young fellow, a marine officer, whose business it was to consummate the vanity of the recruits, by decorating them with helmets beautifully edged with spotted brown paper to look like leopard's skin, a task which he performed standing on a powder barrel, and making the helmet fit any skull, even the largest, by thumping it down with his fists, careless whether it could ever be taken off again—these were circumstances that would have made you smile, though you had been just come from seeing your house in flames. A spectacle not less provoking to mirth presented itself to your view, if you followed the new soldiers after they had received their arms and cartridges, and observed their manner of using them. It was common with them to put in their cartridges at the wrong end, and when they stuck in the passage (as they often did) the inverted barrel was set to work against the ground, till it was bent and useless. At first they were

trusted

trusted with balls as well as with powder. But this practice was not repeated, after it had gone near costing his life to General Humbert. As he was standing at an open window in the castle, the General heard a ball whistle by his ear, discharged by an awkward recruit in the yard below, whom he instantly punished with an unmerciful caning. The ball passed into the cieling, where the mark of it is still apparent. Lastly, it was quite unsuitable to the spirit of these rustic warriors to keep their firelocks idle till they should come in sight of an enemy, when there were so many inferior animals on which they might be tried. A crowd got about Charost one day, clamouring for a supply of powder and shot. 'Tell them,' said the Commandant, in a passion, 'they shall have no more, 'till I am sure they will not waste their charges 'upon ravens.'*

The

* The raven is an object of pursuit for his quills. It was remarked that these birds, not common before in our fields, began to multiply, in proportion as unburied bodies, (a curse on war!) became a spectacle familiar to us. The reader will pardon a short digression for the sake of recording an incident, of which the author of these pages was an eyewitness.

About the time of our greatest peril, when we first learned the news of Ballinamuck, a more than ordinary cawing and chattering had for some days together been observed to take place in the rookery adjoining to the Bishop's garden. At length a cloud of birds was seen to mount into the air from the grove, which dividing

The French, it is well known, are a nation apt enough to consider themselves as superior to any people in the world; but here indeed it would have been ridiculous not to prefer the Gallic troops in every respect before their new allies. Intelligence, activity, temperance, patience, to a surprising degree, appeared to be combined in the soldiery that came over with Humbert, together with the exactest obedience to discipline. Yet, if you except their grenadiers, they had nothing to catch the eye. Their stature for the most part was low, their complexions pale and sallow, their clothes much the worse for the wear: to a superficial observer they would have appeared incapable of enduring almost any hardship. These were the men, however, of whom it was presently observed, that they could be well content to live on bread or potatoes, to drink water, to make the stones of the street their bed, and to sleep in their clothes, with no covering but the canopy of heaven. One half

ing themselves into two regular battalions of crows and ravens, engaged in a combat of several minutes in the upper regions with so much fury, that a company walking in the garden distinctly heard the dashing of their wings against one another. In the end, victory declared for the crows: the intruding ravens took flight, and peace was restored to the old tenants of the grove. It will hardly be wondered, if under our then depression of mind we accepted comfort even from augury.

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of their number had served in Italy under Buonaparte; the rest were from the army of the Rhine, where they had suffered distresses that well accounted for thin persons and wan looks. Several of them declared with all the marks of sincerity, that at the siege of Mentz, during the preceding winter, they had for a long time slept on the ground in holes made four feet deep under the snow. And an officer, pointing to his leather small-clothes, assured the Bishop, that he had not taken them off for a twelvemonth.

Humbert, the leader of this singular body of men, was himself as extraordinary a personage as any in his army. Of a good height and shape, in the full vigour of life, prompt to decide, quick in execution, apparently master of his art, you could not refuse him the praise of a good officer, while his physiognomy forbad you to like him as a man. His eye, which was small and sleepy, (the effect, probably, of much watching,) cast a side-long glance of insidiousness, and even of cruelty: it was the eye of a cat, preparing to spring on her prey. His education and manners were indicative of a person sprung from the lowest orders of society, though he knew how, (as most of his countrymen do,) to assume, where it was convenient, the deportment of a gentleman. For learning,

ing, he scarcely had enough to enable him to write his name. His passions were furious, and all his behaviour seemed marked with the characters of roughness and violence. A narrower observation of him, however, served to discover, that much of this roughness was the result of art, being assumed with the view of extorting by terror a ready compliance with his commands. Of this truth the Bishop himself was one of the first who had occasion to be made sensible.

Boats were necessary to transport the artillery and stores from the ships, cars and horses to forward them by land; and these were to be procured without delay, the life of the present enterprise consisting in dispatch. High prices were offered. But the fishermen of Killalla at first kept out of the way; and of the cars none could be got, but what were seised at the first onset. Application, therefore, was made to the Bishop, whose answer was (what was really true) that he had no authority in that place, civil or personal; that he was not a magistrate, nor had time to be acquainted with the people, having settled himself in the town, from another part of the kingdom, only a few months before. Humbert replied, that he should not have troubled his Lordship, if the proper magistrate had not fled, in violation of his parole; that

that he cared little, by what means the Bishop should contrive to get him what he wanted; but as he was the principal inhabitant, he must and would charge him with the office of producing boats and cars, and that by the very next morning. The Bishop, in Humbert's presence, desired his people to go out into the town, and try to convince the inhabitants that the General's orders must be obeyed.

Next morning, when neither boat nor car appeared, Humbert became furious. He poured forth a torrent of vulgar abuse, roared, stamped, laid his hand frequently on a scymitar that battered the ground, presented a pistol at the Bishop's eldest son, and at last told the Bishop himself, that he would make him sensible he was not to be trifled with, for he would punish his disobedience by sending him instantly to France. Orders to this effect were given on the spot to an officer, who delivered him in charge to a corporal's guard, only allowing him time to put on his hat. The inhabitants stared in silence, as they saw the Bishop conducted on foot through the town. The French soldiers marched him at a good pace along the road that led to the ships, and seemed to have received orders not to answer any of his questions.

When

When they had advanced about half a mile, and were beginning to pass a hill that would have concealed the town from their view, they were overtaken by an express on horseback, with the General's orders to return. On entering the castle, the Bishop was hailed with the gratulations of the French officers, and excuses for the conduct of their commander, a hasty man, they said, but very good-natured. Humbert himself received him on the stairs with an apology for what he had done, pleading necessity, an apology which was readily admitted. Indeed the Bishop had felt no apprehension at any time, that the menace would be seriously carried into effect. He knew the French could not want his presence, nor his assistance as an interpreter; and he saw, through its disguise, the real object of Humbert's affected fury, which ended, as that officer had expected, in the immediate appearance of the people of whom he was in search. The Bishop's danger, if there was any, was so quickly over, that happily the greater part of his family knew nothing of it till it was past.

Scarcely, however, had he got clear of one disagreeable business, when another was thrown in his way. Every thing being ready for a march by Saturday the 25th, the French General determined

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to leave behind him at Killalla two hundred of his own soldiers, under the command of half a dozen officers, to secure himself a retreat, in case of miscarriage, to his ammunition, a large proportion of which, to the amount of 280 barrels of 100 pounds each, could not be immediately forwarded for want of the means of conveyance. But this was not the ostensible reason for leaving the men. It was pretended, that they were suffered to remain out of pure compassion to the protestants of the vicinity, whose lives might be in danger from the new levies, while the French were elsewhere employed. Hostages therefore must be taken at least as far as Ballina, in exchange for the six officers that should be left to keep the peace at Killalla; and the Bishop was given to understand, that he himself, and one of his sons, must make a part of the number. Remonstrances were vain. The Bishop found himself obliged to communicate the unwelcome tidings to the family, and to order his chaise for the following morning.

At no one period of their calamity, perhaps, did the patience of the women sustain a ruder assault. To be separated, under such circumstances, from their principal human support, for a time unknown, perhaps for ever (for it was then said and believed, that the hostages were destined to follow every

where the camp and fortunes of the invaders) this was bitter news. Mrs. Thompson, the Dean's lady, sunk under it into a swoon: advanced in her pregnancy, she had nerves that did not keep pace with the excellent temper of her mind. Mrs. Stock and Mrs. Cope said nothing. But the eye, that met their eyes during that scene of anguish, feels a dimness at the reviewal of it.

Next morning (Sunday) the prospect cleared up a little, though still unpleasant. The General had changed his mind, and would accept of the Bishop's eldest son in place of the father. It was a strange alleviation of pain, to be derived from exposing to danger a son, who had found favour with every body that knew him, as well as with his parents. But the youth (a college lad under nineteen) thought nothing of a danger from which his father was exempted, and went off chearfully with the other four hostages, whom the Bishop was ordered to nominate; for Humbert had consented to take but one of the sons instead of two. The four named were John Knox, Esq. of Bartrach; Thomas Kirkwood, Lieutenant of the Tyrawley Cavalry; James Rutledge, Custom-house Officer; and the Curate, Mr. Nixon.

With a levity which seemed to mark the general tenor of his conduct, Humbert signified to

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the hostages, presently after their arrival at Ballina, that they were at liberty to go home again. He himself marched his forces directly towards Castlebar, leaving one Truc, an ignorant brutal officer, with a few French, and a rabble of the Irish, to retain possession of Ballina. Truc would not confirm the indulgence, granted by the General, till the day following; so that the five gentlemen passed a most unquiet night amidst a crew of drunken and insolent rebels, with scarcely any accommodation. The horses, on which they rode to Ballina, were not to be found next day; but the hostages were glad to find their way back again on foot.

The charge of Killalla, with the title of Commandant, was committed to M. Charost, *Chef de Demi-brigade*, which answers to our title of Lieutenant-Colonel. The choice proved a fortunate one for the town; Charost being a man of sense and honour, in short, in every respect the opposite of Truc. This officer began his command by obliging the Bishop so far as to grant a passport to Captain Hill, the worthy Register of the Diocese, empowering him to go home to Limerick. By him the Bishop found the much-desired opportunity of conveying a letter to his friends in Dublin, the only one they received from him till the

town was recovered. A verbal account, however, of the family, was carried to Dublin by Doctor Ellison, who got leave from Charost, on the 29th, to return to Caſtlebar, from which town he followed his lady and family to the capital. Mr. John Thompson, the Dean's brother, was permitted, at the same time with Dr. Ellison, to go to his house in Castlebar, where he hospitably entertained the Bishop's son Arthur, when he was presently after sent to the same town in quality of hostage.

Though the enemy took away nothing with them, when they moved, but what was necessary for their operations in the field, yet that necessity was found to comprehend the best part of what the country possessed, whether of stock or victuals The Bishop's larder and cellar, both plentifully stored at that season, scarcely sufficed for three days. Every thing that he had in the fields disappeared: corn, potatoes, cattle, were all wanted, and taken from *him*, before any thing was touched that belonged to the poor. Of his kitchen grate so incessant use was made, from early morning even to midnight, that the chimney was on fire more than once, and in the middle of summer above thirty ton of coals lasted only one month. His stables yielded nine horses of his own (most

of them good ones) with proper furniture; and his guests contributed about half a dozen more. The coach-house was stript of nothing but harness, those brave officers despising the luxury of a chaise. Cars, carts, and a large waggon, with their furniture, went of course. In three days he had lost to the value of 600l. But it was clear, that even this damage was nothing in comparison of what he must have sustained, if he had fled, (as he was advised, and even offered the means to do) on the first approach of the French. The ruin of his house and furniture, both valuable, would have been the consequence; not to speak of the mischiefs throughout the neighbourhood, which he was happy enough by his presence and exertions to avert.

The enemy's main body had hardly marched from Killala, when a flag of truce arrived from Castlebar, carried by Captain Grey, of the carabineers. It came under the pretence of inquiring after an officer, who was wounded and made prisoner at Ballina; but the object of it was to learn the force of the enemy. As soon as this was known, Captain Grey privately desired us not to be uneasy, for a force equal to three times their number was waiting at Castlebar to give a good account of them. This happened on Sunday.

How

How distressing then to the friends of Government was the intelligence, received within twenty-four hours after by express from Serrasin, the second in command of the French army, that a complete victory had been gained by them over our troops, eight hundred of whom had been taken or slain, ten pieces of cannon had fallen into their hands, and Castlebar had surrendered to them! 'Irish liberty,' concluded the letter triumphantly, 'is established.'

The writer of this narrative professes only to describe what he saw and felt. It is not his business, therefore, if he were competent to the task, to trace the events of an invasion, the first successes of which caused so much astonishment; or to shew by what means a handful of men continued so long to brave the force of a whole kingdom; men, who from the time they missed their reinforcements from home, confessed their belief that they were no more than a forlorn hope, sent to annoy the enemies of their country, and, that duty done, expected every hour to be forced to surrender themselves prisoners of war. The inhabitant of Killalla, cut off from the rest of Ireland, in front by the sea, and behind by a cordon of mountains, out of which the two only passages were continually guarded by the rebels, knew scarcely

scarcely any thing that was going forward but what passed under his eyes.

A melancholy proof, that treason had a hand in the success of the French at Castlebar, was soon exhibited in the Bishop's court-yard. Fifty-three deserters from the Longford militia marched in, amidst the shouts of the multitude, with their coats turned, and there exchanged the uniforms given them by their sovereign, for the blue coats of France ! It was a strange sight, and to protestant spectators, most provoking. To comfort the Bishop, the commissary made him a present of the deserters' uniforms. He took the gift, foreseeing that he should ere long find naked bodies in plenty to cover with them. Report said, that in a few days the rebel camp at Killalla was joined by fourscore more deserters from the Longford and Kilkenny militia. Not a man of these infamous betrayers of their King and country returned alive to his home.

From the day that succeeded the battle of Castlebar (Aug. 28,) suspence was kept alive at Killalla, by the report of cannon on the inland side, and by the appearance of a squadron of frigates n the offing, which were called French or English according to the wishes of the spectators. These ships varied in number, from one or two

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to five, appearing irresolute what course to take, till at length three * went off towards Sligo; a fourth, of 32 guns, with a cutter of 16, continued hovering in the bay, and was at one time near losing her cutter on the bar. The French cherished hopes that it might be the squadron they expected from Brest, till on the 30th they saw the single frigate send out her boats to destroy two trading vessels, of which the French had taken possession, one to transport their ammunition, which had just been all landed, the other to supply the town with forty ton of oatmeal. The crew of this last, seven Frenchmen, were carried to the frigate. The two sloops continued burning all night, and part of the next day. Some of the poor town's-people, venturing to board the oatmeal sloop, to save what they could of so tempting a provision, narrowly escaped death by an eighteen-pounder from the frigate.

As long as the two hundred French soldiers were suffered to remain for the defence of Killalla, the protestant inhabitants felt themselves perfectly

* These were, as we learned afterwards, the Doris, of 36 guns, Lord Ranelagh; the Melampus, ditto, Capt. Moore; and the Fox cutter, of 12 guns, Lieutenant Walsh. The vessels that ſtayed were the Cerberus, 32 guns, 18-pounders, Captain M'Namara, and the Hurler cutter, Captain J. Norway, carrying 16 carronades, 18-pounders.

secure,

secure, though the number of insurgents, that poured in from the country to a camp they formed in the Bishop's demesne, increased every hour. The case was sadly altered from the first of September. On that day the commandant showed the Bishop an order he had received from General Humbert to send away immediately to Castlebar the whole French garrison of Killalla, none excepted, but M. Charost himself, and another officer of the name of Ponson. These two were to keep the town with about two hundred of the Irish recruits.

All the horrors, that had been acted at Wexford, now stared the Loyalists in the face. 'Famished wolves are closing us in on every side,' said they to Charost, 'and what can two men 'effect, though ever so brave and vigilant?' The Commandant desired them to be quiet, assuring them that he would part with his life sooner than abandon them; but he told the Bishop, that as, by staying here to protect the Protestants, he ran the hazard of losing his own liberty, he thought it but reasonable that one of the Bishop's sons should go with the troops to Castlebar, to be an hostage for his person, in case of the English becoming again masters of Killalla. To this the Bishop could not object. His second and third sons, therefore,

therefore, drew lots, and the chance falling on Arthur, the third son, a lad just sixteen, he was sent away about seven in the evening, on a poor jade ill accoutred, to travel all night with the French. From that day till the engagement at Killalla, above three weeks after, his parents could hear nothing from him, nor he from them; so strictly were the passes guarded.

Immediately after the departure of the foreigners, the Commandant applied himself to make provision for the security of the district entrusted to him. A strong patrole, in different bodies, was ordered to parade through the town and its environs, to the distance of three miles, every night. But as reports of robberies and midnight assaults came in continually, M. Charost thought it advisable to issue a proclamation, inviting all the inhabitants, without distinction of religion or party, to come to him, and receive arms and ammunition for their own defence, under no other condition than a promise of restoring them to him when he should call for them. The offer was presently embraced by the towns' people, especially by the Protestant part of them, who were most exposed to danger, and had been forced, at the beginning of the invasion, to deliver up their arms to the French. A distribution accordingly began

began to be made in the castle-yard, on the even ing of Sept. 1st.

The Commandant had now an opportunity of judging, whether the fears of the Protestants from their Popish neighbours were justly founded. As the patrole was setting at that time, the rebels (all Romanists) began to murmur at trusting arms to the Protestant townsmen, which they were sure, they said, would be employed against the French and their allies the moment an English force appeared. Nor did the mutineers want a leader. One Mulheeran, a rebel officer, was their spokesman, a strong-made stout fellow, who defended himself afterwards like a lion at the battle of Killalla against three or four troopers, all cutting him with their swords, and did not fall till his skull was hacked to pieces. This man resisted the Commandant to his face, and went so far as to throw down the arms he had received from the French, when Charost told him he would trust all alike with arms, who chose to take a musquet in their own defence. The Bishop laboured hard to pacify the malecontents, amidst darkness and clamour, and the confusion of three languages.

After an hour's struggle, several of the Protestants, intimidated by the menaces of the others, returned the arms they had received, and said they would

would trust themselves to the protection of the patrole ; which put an end, for that night, to the disturbance.

It was renewed, however, the two following days with unabating violence ; till at length the Protestants, harassed by domiciliary visits of armed rebels in search of concealed weapons, agreed in a petition to the Commandant that he would call in by proclamation what he had given out, and forbid in future any person's appearing in arms, except recruits for the French service. The terror of being thus stript of the means of defence was exaggerated by the alarming accounts of depredations on every side of Killalla, to the distance of several miles. Not a night passed, but some house was rifled ; scarce an hour in the day elapsed, in which the Bishop was not importuned to lay some lamentation before the Commandant, or to send out some guard for protection. Willing to do his best, he interpreted, he drew up petitions, he dispatched guards to Protestant families in the neighbourhood, he went from house to house in the town to inquire after abuses, till in the evening always, and frequently in the day time, he was forced to throw himself on a bed, unable to keep his feet. Yet his health and appetite seemed to be improved

improved by the extraordinary fatigue, nor did he ever in his life sleep better.

But if it was doubtful whether arms might safely be committed to every inhabitant of Killalla, it admitted no dispute at all, that the town could not exist without some form of civil government. Depredators crowded in hourly from the country, to the equal annoyance and terror of every body that had property, whether Catholic or Protestant. The French, it was said, had divided the town and neighbourhood of Castlebar into districts, appointing over each a Municipal Officer, with a guard at his command, properly armed for the public defence; and the scheme had there had the desired success. A proclamation was therefore issued, for establishing a similar form through the canton over which Charost presided. The country was thrown into departments; a magistrate, to be elected by his neighbours, was to take charge of each, with the help of a guard of sixteen or twenty men; arms and ammunition were to be distributed to these, under an express stipulation, that neither officers nor men should be marched out of their respective departments, nor employed against their Sovereign, nor in any service except that of keeping the peace. The town of Killalla was committed to the protection of one

hundred

hundred and fifty men, in three bodies, all to be observant of the orders of Mr. James Devitt, the Civil Magistrate, unanimously chosen by the people, because he was a substantial tradesman, a Roman Catholic, and a man of sense and moderation. He had under him two assistants, of his own religion. The benefits of this regulation were felt immediately in the establishment of tolerable order and quiet, at least in and about the town ; and without doubt they would have been felt to a greater extent, if the French power had been firmer.

The example of Killalla was presently copied in the other departments. Magistrates were elected, always Roman catholicks, but commonly of the better sort among them, persons who had no desire to take arms against the British Government. Some of these applied to the Bishop for his opinion, whether they should incur the penalties of treason by acting under a foreign power, merely for the common safety, and under the conditions stated above. His answer was, that he was no lawyer : but having always found the law of England to be consonant to reason, he would take upon him to say, there could be no law forbidding to do, under these circumstances, what was absolutely enjoined by the great law of self-preservation.

tion. It is reported, that when the rebellion was over, several persons muttered against this doctrine : it might be conceded, they said, to the existing terror, but it was not sound, because it might be employed as an excuse for a tame and prompt submission to any invaders. To such tranquil declaimers on the merit of casting away life and property, in preference to bowing the head to a storm, it is obvious to reply, that had they changed situations with those who actually felt the distress, it is more than probable they would have seen good reason to adopt the very conduct, which in the fulness of security they take upon them to condemn. To submit to a King *de facto*, and even to act by a commission from such a one to preserve the peace of the community, provided by so doing, you do not preclude yourself from returning under the government of a King *de jure*, is a practice sanctioned by the authority of our most equitable English law.

For the defence of the castle, which was declared to be the head-quarters of the allied army, a guard was drawn from the garrison, consisting of from sixteen to twenty men, who were seldom relieved above once in twenty-four hours. Of these, four watched at the Commandant's door, in the lobby of the middle story; four were placed in the

the hall; the rest were distributed at the gates in back and front, which had luckily been repaired and made secure by the Bishop just before the invasion. Policy concurred with charity in recommending these poor guards to our daily care: they were fed and lodged so much better than any other soldiers, that it occasioned quarrels, and boxings among them sometimes, for a preference to be stationed on the castle-guard. And indeed they repaid the attention shewn to them, by every mark of respect in their power, and by assisting in little menial offices in and about the house wherever they were wanted.

Yet was the presence of such protectors a circumstance to the family most dreadful. The gates, the doors, every thing within as well as without, our very existence was in custody of a band of rebels, who had the power at any instant to throw open the house to their companions abroad, and let in depredation at least, if nothing worse. And this was a mischief too, that happened not unfrequently. At Castle-Lackan, Castlereagh, and other houses belonging to protestants, where guards had been stationed, the soldiers proved traitors, and admitted rogues from without to plunder the families they were sent to defend. If plunder was attractive, few houses offered more temptations

tations in that way than the Bishop's, not only because it contained much valuable property of his own, but because, in spite of prudence, he could not refuse to let it become the repository of other people's goods. Plate, cash, leases, and writings of consequence, were crouded in upon him, with an eagerness that would take no denial, and with too little caution to render the affair a secret. The Commandant was made acquainted with these several causes of apprehension, on our part, and distrust of his Irish friends. He made light of them for a long time, in a real or seeming confidence of retaining his authority over the rebels; though, as the final period of our captivity approached, his looks, as well as his redoubled precautions, shewed, that he began to be almost as uneasy as ourselves.

The Commandant and the Bishop, finding each other to be honest men, above the meanness of deceit, soon came to a mutual good understanding. Charost trusted the Bishop with a sight of a letter from General Humbert to himself, enjoining him either to bury privately the powder left in his care, or to throw it into the sea, according as he should find it most prudent and feasible. As to conveying 280 barrels of powder from the castle-yard to the sea, through the midst of armed

rebels

rebels, eagerly bent on seizing the powder for their own use, it required not many words to shew the extreme improbability of effecting such a scheme. It remained, therefore, to bury it, and that in some place within the walls of the castle, sufficient to contain and hide it. With the help of some labourers who continued faithful to him, and of his own domestics, the Bishop contrived, in several nights' continual work, to bury 90 barrels under a hot-bed in the garden: the remainder was committed to a vault in the haggard under the corn-stand, where, though it could not be said to be concealed, it was at least secured, as far as might be under the given circumstances, from the dreaded danger of firing by accident.

No less than three times, during our troubles, was this danger on the very point of being realized. The first time was in the French reign, when the kitchen chimney was set on fire by the immoderate use of the grate, as I mentioned above. On the second occasion, we were saved only by the providential direction of the wind from catching the flames of a cabin just beside us, which was fired by the king's troops when they entered the town on the 23d of September. The third was the most alarming danger of all. On the evening of that same remarkable 23d of September, an ho-

nest inoffensive labourer of the Bishop's quitted the castle to oblige his wife to stay within doors, who, with the fears of a woman great with child, was running wildly about the road in the midst of the fire from the army. He had seized her hand, and was hurrying her to his cabin, when a discharge of musquetry killed the man, and mortally wounded the woman. She was carried up to the granary in the castle, where she died that night. Without leave asked, without even apprising the family that they had brought the woman into the house, the foolish people about her began to wake the corpse, by lighting a fire on the floor of the granary, with nothing under the turf but a wooden board. Presently smoke and flames were seen to roll out of the windows of an apartment distant but a few yards from the gunpowder in the haggard, and the wind pointing directly that way. At the same instant all was confusion and uproar in the house: the victorious army was marching into quarters at Killalla, and the principal officers were busy in arranging matters for their own accommodation at the castle. It cost the Bishop some labour to make the gentlemen listen to the story, and believe, that if they did not bestir themselves, the town and all its contents would very probably in a few minutes be erased from the

the face of the earth. By the active exertions principally of the Knight of Kerry, the fire was soon after got under.

From the time the French left us to the care of M. Charost, he and two officers under him, messed with the Bishop's family, where they were very welcome, being, under Providence, their sole protectors in the midst of so many perils. Whatever could be effected by vigilance, resolution, and conduct, for the safety of a place confided to them, was to a surprising degree effected for the district of Killalla by these three French officers, without the support of a single soldier of their own country; and that for the long space of 23 days, from the 1st of September to the day of the battle. It is natural to suppose, that in such a tract of time, a tolerable insight must have been obtained into their characters; and where the part they acted was of so much consequence, the Reader may expect some description of them.

Lieut. Colonel Charost had attained to the age of five-and-forty. He was born in Paris, the son (as I was told) of a watchmaker in that city, who sent him over early to some connections in St. Domingo, where he was fortunate enough to marry a wife with a plantation for her dowry, which yielded, him before the troubles, an income

two thousand pounds sterling per annum. By the unhappy war which still desolates that island, he lost every thing, even to his wife and his only child, a daughter; they were taken on their passage to France, and sent away to Jamaica. His eyes would fill when he told the family, that he had not seen these dear relatives for six years past, nor even had tidings of them for the last three years. On returning to France, he embraced the military life, at first in the Royal service, afterwards, when the times changed, in that of the Republic, where he had risen by due degrees to the rank he now filled. His residence had been at Rochelle with a brother, with whom he had shared bed and board till he was called, at only three days' notice, to go out on the present expedition. In person he was strong and vigorous, inclining to fat; his countenance was chearful, and on the whole, pleasing, notwithstanding a blemish in one eye; he had a plain, good understanding, which served him for all the uses that he put it to, and he had either no leisure, or no liking, to strain it with over labour. His religion, he told the Bishop, he had yet to seek; because his father being a catholic, and his mother a protestant, they had left him the liberty of choosing for himself, and he had never yet found time to make the inquiry,

inquiry, which however, he was sensible he ought to make, and would make at some time when Heaven should grant him repose. In the interim, he believed in God, was inclined to think there must be a future state, and was very sure that, while he lived in this world, it was his duty to do all the good to his fellow-creatures that he could. The Bishop offered a present to this half-christian of a book that might have satisfied his doubts, *La religion naturelle et revelée par l' Abbé Tremblay*. He was thankful; but it is not unlikely the sight even of three small volumes frightened him, for he never afterwards claimed the promise. Yet what he did not exhibit in his own conduct, he appeared to respect in others; for he took care that no noise nor disturbance should be made in the castle on Sundays, while the family and many protestants from the town were assembled in the library at their devotions.

Boudet, the next in rank to the Commandant, was a Captain of foot, a native of Normandy, 28 years of age. His father, he said, was yet living, though 67 years old when he was born. His height was six feet, two inches. In person, complexion, and gravity, he was no inadequate representation of the Knight of La Mancha, whose example he followed in a recital of his own prowess

and wonderful exploits, delivered in measured language, and an imposing seriousness of aspect. He came to Killalla from the town of Newport-Pratt, which he assured us he had taken with his own hand, though defended by four English troopers; he had gallantly kept the place for three or four days, and retired from it only because it was assailed by fifteen horse—but we were not to be surprised that so much should be atchieved by an officer, bred in the Ecole Militaire at Paris to be one of the late King's body-guard, trained from his childhood to arms, a man who had served in Flanders and on the Rhine, and had more than once been obliged to trample on mountains of dead and dying men after a battle. To vanity he added a fault that does not often go along with it, pride. He valued himself on an education superior to that of his companions in arms; was argumentative, contradictious, and irascible; so that his superior officer found it no easy matter to maintain peace with him. His manner, however, though distant, was polite; and he seemed to possess a more than common share of feeling, if a judgment might be formed from the energy with which he declaimed on the miseries of wars and revolutions. His integrity and courage appeared unquestionable. On the whole, when we became familiarized to his failings,

failings, we saw reason every day to respect his virtues.

The last of this trio was named Ponson, a curious contrast, in every respect, to the character just described. In stature he did not exceed five feet, six inches; but if the body was little, it was alive from head to foot. Navarre gave him birth, the country of Henry IV. and his merry countenance recalled to mind the features of that celebrated Monarch, though without the air of benevolence diffused through them; for this monkey seemed to have no great feeling for any body but himself. Wherever he was, his presence was testified by a noise as loud and as pertinacious as that of a corn-creak; it was a continued roll of talk, or laughter, or whistling. The decencies of polished life he had probably never known; or if he had, he affected to despise them. Yet in a gloomy hour this eternal rattle had its use: it more than once kept our spirits buoyant, when terror pressed heaviest. I shall mention two instances. One day a crowd of pikemen, clamorous with some insolent demand upon the Commandant, appeared on the point of breaking down the castle gate. The Bishop expressed his apprehensions to Ponson. 'I will tell you what to do,' said he: 'step out 'among them suddenly, and cry *stop thief*, and 'they

'they will every man of them take to their heels.' The other occasion was that very serious one, when (as shall be related presently) the news of the French overthrow had weakened the authority of the Commandant to that degree, that the rebels were deterred from laying hands on the Protestants at Killalla only by the Bishop's proposal of sending embassadors to Castlebar, to obtain good treatment for the rebel prisoners there. The Bishop and the Commandant stood outside at the gate, close circled by malecontents; authority and argument had been tried by turns, mutinous whispers were going round, the final issue of the parley was very uncertain. At this critical moment appeared Ponson, coming in from the town, with a face expressive of horror. 'Commandant,' said he, 'I have 'a shocking piece of news to tell you.' What news? said the other, who was not in a very good humour to listen to any news. 'I am married,' cried Ponson—'married, I give you my oath, to 'Miss such a one,' naming the prettiest girl in the town. 'This here wicked Curate,' (Mr. Nixon, whom he held by the arm,) 'has tied the knot, 'before I could find out what he was about.' This ridiculous sally, when explained to the by-standers, relaxed the features of the whole company; scowling

scowling looks were dropt, and peace and mutual agreement succeeded.

Ponson was hardy, and patient to admiration of labour and want of rest. A continued watching of five days and nights together, when the rebels were growing desperate for prey and mischief, did not appear to sink his spirits in the smallest degree. He was ready at a moment's notice to sally out upon the marauders, whom, if he caught them in the fact, he belaboured without mercy, and without a symptom of fear for his own safety. Tied to a sword as long as himself, and armed with pistols, firelock and bayonet, he stretched himself up to view till he became terrific—at least he frightened many a tall peasant most heartily. He was strictly honest, and could not bear the want of this quality in others; so that his patience was pretty well tried by his Irish allies, for whom he could not find names sufficiently expressive of contempt. The worst part of his character was that which related to religion. The Commandant reported him to be a downright Atheist. In his practice he went beyond the common herd of the French army, who, though they shewed no desire to join in worship with any people (a circumstance frightful to all, and astonishing to the Roman Catholics) yet respected the devotions of their neighbours.

neighbours. Ponson was a stouter sinner. The first time he dined with the family at the castle, the Bishop observing him suddenly to quit the room, asked the Commandant what he meant. 'You will hardly believe,' said Charost, 'that 'your saying grace to your meat appeared to him 'an action so very ridiculous, that as he knew it 'would be ill manners to laugh, he was forced to 'leave the table till he could suppress the emo-'tion.' In fact the Bishop did *not* believe it, but in his own mind attributed the action to a more probable cause, vanity, the miserable affectation of appearing to be more wicked than he really was.

With these three Frenchmen was sometimes joined an officer of theirs from Ballina, who bore the title of Major O'Keon. A native of our barony of Tyrawley, O'Keon had received his education for the priesthood in France, and had attained to a benefice of some value in the church, when the revolution, stripping him at once of profession and livelihood, forced him to become a soldier for bread. The common road to a commission in the French armies is now, I understand, length of service in the ranks. By service O'Keon was become either a Major or a Captain, for he was called indifferently by both names. He was a fat, jolly looking man, with a ruddy countenance

nance that carried nothing forbidding in it, except that his black thick eye-brows ran into each other, as they often do in aboriginal Irish faces. Of the English tongue he retained enough to be quite intelligible; and being also expert in Irish as well as French, he was able to render considerable service to his cause. His connections with this neighbourhood (for he had a father and two brothers near Ballina, heartily affected to the French) induce a strong suspicion of the truth of a story which he gave out when he first landed, and to which he adhered to the last, that his being destined to this expedition was an accident, and that the squadron itself, which brought him over, was intended to invade, not Killalla, but Donegal. From his conversation the Bishop had conceived a good opinion of this man. His language breathed nothing but mildness and liberality; and indeed his behaviour was suitable, for he exerted himself on all occasions to protect the loyalists, and frequently with the greatest effect. At one time, particularly, he is said to have prevailed on an armed mob at Ballina to drop their declared purpose of marching to Killalla to have all the protestants there imprisoned: it is even added, that he turned them back after they had actually advanced a part of the way. This conduct, whether

ther he adopted it from principle or policy, contributed more, than his proving himself to be a naturalized Frenchman, to save his life afterwards on his court-martial at Castlebar. He escaped with some difficulty, with the help of an attestation in his favour from the Bishop among many others, and being forbid ever to return to the British territories, he expressed in Dublin, and more lately by letter from Yarmouth, the highest sense of his obligations to the Bishop. It is painful to add, that experience and further inquiry into the character of this quondam priest has convinced his benefactor, that the man was deficient both in morals and common honesty.*

Before Humbert had quitted Killalla, a person came to him from Ballina, of the name of Bellew. He was brother to Dr. Bellew, the titular Bishop of the see, and by his own report was not long since come from abroad to try to recover a patrimony, from the possession of which he was unjustly detained by his brother. To the loyalists he protested, that the prospect of being enabled to take vengeance on this brother, was his chief inducement for joining the French: to General Humbert he urged the merit of his military know-

* He cheated the Bishop of twelve guineas, and he carried off from Dublin another man's wife.

ledge,

ledge, acquired by eighteen years' service under the Emperor. He was taken by the General at his word, and presently received from him a pompous commission to be Generalissimo of all the allies of France, levied and to be levied within a district extending from Ballina to Westport. It appeared in the sequel, how little the French regarded their own commissions to Irishmen; for this man presently shewing by his behaviour that he was a beastly drunkard almost to lunacy, Charost turned him out of his office with disgrace, in the face of the rebel army, without waiting for Humbert's orders, and gave the charge of the levies to O'Donnel. As long as he had any authority, *M. le General* Bellew was a sad nuisance to the people of Killalla, particularly to the family of Mr. Owen Morrison, a worthy and very respectable protestant merchant, at whose house he chose to take up his quarters. He there lived as in a conquered country, extorting by threats from his hosts whatever he wanted, even to wearing apparel, getting drunk continually, lighting his pipe with paper torn from the walls of his apartment, and laying a heavy tax on the sight and smell of every body that approached him, being to the last degree filthy in his person, and eaten up with the itch. When he got any fresh cloth-

ing,

ing, his practice was to put it over the old habiliments; so that he wore two or three shirts, and a pair of satin small clothes, of Mr. Morrison's, when he was hanged. For to this catastrophe the wretched creature deservedly came at last. He was taken at the battle of Killalla, tried by the court-martial, and executed two days after in the Bishop's demesne.

Bad as the situation of the owners of the castle during their captivity appeared to be, it must be confessed it was in many respects far better than that of the town's people. The castle, being head-quarters, was regularly supplied with provisions, drawn from the plunder of the country; and the presence of the French officers, added to the large family always resident in it, left little room for intruders from the rebel army. In the town the case was different. There a scarcity next to famine soon appeared; rapine, the only source of subsistence, often failed of success; every petty fellow, who could by theft or violence provide himself with a sword and a case of pistols, immediately took the name and authority of an officer, and lived (especially in protestant houses, which were almost the only decent ones) at his discretion. Personal injuries, indeed, were rare, because the municipal power was always at hand to restrain or punish

punish them: but insolence and avarice had their full swing. In popular commotions it has generally been observed, that natural talents go but a little way to procure influence; the leader of a mob is almost invariably the man that outgoes all the rest in wickedness and audacity. An example, in proof of this observation, occurred on the morning of the 6th of September.

The castle family were assembled at tea, and Mrs. Stock and the Commandant amusing themselves (as well as they could with two separate languages) at a party of picquet, when word was brought that a Mr. Goodwin, a protestant of the town, had just been sent to prison by Major Flanagan, without a shadow of reason, and that he must remain in custody till the morning, unless the Commandant would come to his aid. This pretended major was a drunken daring wretch, who had kept an ale-house at Killalla, and was but lately returned from the gaol of Castlebar, where he had been confined on a charge of treason, and narrowly escaped transportation. The company rose, and the gentlemen accompanied the Commandant to the scene of disturbance, Mr. Morrison's house, the Bishop himself thinking the occasion of that nature as to demand some risk of his own person. At the door, where a great crowd had

assembled, they found Flanagan on horseback, drunk and very noisy. The Commandant, by his interpreter the Bishop, asked the man his authority for committing people to prison, commanded him to go and discharge his prisoner, and was answered saucily, that he would not let Goodwin stir from the Prevôt that night, let who would order it. It was a very serious crisis. There was just light enough to discern in the faces of the surrounding multitude a doubt, a wavering between the two contending parties, which would probably be decided in favour of that which stood firmest to its point. Bellew, the mock General, took the part of his fellow-drunkard, entreating him in a wheedling tone to give a promise that he would set the prisoner at libeaty in the morning.

Most of the spectators were armed. Had a spirit of mischief prompted any one of them to raise his weapon against the Commandant and his company, a general massacre and anarchy would most probably have followed. Charost was sensible that all depended on steadiness. With a strong and firm tone he commanded Flanagan to quit his horse. The culprit, looking round for help, and seeing none, obeyed. He was then deliberately stript by the Commandant himself of his pistols and sword, and put under arrest for disobeying

the orders of his superior officer, when he was first spoken to. The place of his confinement, it was supposed, would, for that night at least, be the house near which they were standing, and already Flanagan's comrades, under a shew of respect for the arrest, were leading him into Mr. Morrison's, when the Bishop hastily interposing cried out to the Commandant not to let him go. The hint was taken, for the fellow would surely have been liberated as soon as we had turned our backs. Charost took his arm, the tall Norman marched before him, Ponson strutted behind, supported by the castle gentry, and the procession arrived without let or molestation at the guard-room by the castle gate, where the mutineer was ordered to take up his quarters for the night. The crowd then dispersed; Goodwin was set at liberty; and after a two hours' confinement Mr. Toby Flanagan was allowed to go about his business, divested of his borrowed authority, together with the ensigns of it, his sword and pistols, which the Commandant would never afterwards suffer him to resume. The Bishop met him at times in the street, and was certain from his scowling visage that he meditated revenge. Indeed he had at all times an uncommon wickedness in his eyes, which, though dark

and piercing, he was unable to fix steadily upon an honest man. His death therefore, on the day of Killalla, was the only one at the news of which the whole town seemed to concur in rejoicing; nor was the manner of it dissimilar from his life. He had fled from the battle into a house in the town, where he knew he had no chance of being long hid from his pursuers. So he joined a party of the victors as they were in full chase after the rebels, crying out 'that he would be their guide 'to the wicked croppies,' till coming to a place where two passages met, he pointed out one of them to the soldiers, and threw himself headlong into the other. 'That's a croppie himself,' exclaimed with an oath a Fraser fencible, who had kept his eyes upon him; and on the instant he sent a ball after the wily fugitive, which terminated all his pranks at once.

On the seventh of September, an obscure report arrived at Killalla of the action at Colooney, fought on the fifth, which was said to have ended in favour of the French. It was added, that Lord Cornwallis was advancing in person, to stop their progress, at the head of more than 20,000 men. The story wrought the effects that might be expected. The popish inhabitants became mad with apprehensions from their protestant brethren,

on whom they seemed every moment on the very point of laying violent hands. The pretext was still the same, that the French officers were trusting Orangemen with the implements of destruction. Mr. John Bourke of Summer-hill, about two miles from Killalla, a protestant of good property, was (I believe) the only gentleman in the barony capable of bearing arms, who had not joined some yeoman corps, nor been carried away from his house and farm to act against the enemy. He was at Sligo when he heard of the invasion, from which town he hastened away to his own house, and immediately set about the defence of it with great spirit and prudence. He bricked up the windows in the ground-floor, together with the door in front, put arms into the hands of four or five people whom he could trust, plied them well with food and whiskey, and thus fortified, he challenged the marauders of the country to do their worst. Ammunition however was likely to fail him, and in quest of this he found himself obliged to come to Killalla. Through the Bishop he represented his perilous situation to the Commandant; that his house stood single, in constant danger of pillage, but that he would trouble no body for assistance, if he might only have a grant from the French of powder and ball to arm his own people. Cha-

rost approved of the young man's spirit, and ordered him a small cask of powder immediately. Mr. Bourke had at first entertained thoughts of acting as one of the municipal officers appointed to keep the peace, in the hope thereby of protecting his own property; but he dropt the project, on finding that he was not likely to be elected by his neighbours, and now confined his attention to the getting home safely the present he had received of gunpowder. This however he was quite unable to accomplish. A furious clamour was raised at the castle gate, as soon as the powder cask was observed on the car; remonstrance was followed by threatening, the car was stopt, and Mr. Bourke was forced to resign what with so much hazard of his person in coming to Killalla he had obtained.

Saturday Sept. 8, (a day memorable for the victory at Ballinamuck) exhibited to the town of Killalla a new subject of alarm and terror. Hitherto it had been, to such as had any thing to lose, matter of comfort to observe, how awkwardly the armed peasants handled their firelocks, and how slow a progress they were making in the arts of destruction. This day, for the first time, pikes began to be talked of, instead of musquets. An officer of the rebels, one of the very few among

among them who seemed to have a head for mischief as well as a heart, signified to the Commandant (still by the Bishop, who made it a point to interpret faithfully, even where the matter of discourse made him shudder) that the friends of liberty, seeing the fire-arms were all distributed, and that they were not thought worthy of being trusted with the ammunition brought from France, had come to a resolution of forming a strong body of pikemen, who, they trusted, would be found capable of doing at least as much execution on the enemy as any of their fellows. They therefore desired permission to seize upon all the iron they could find in the stores of Mr. Kirkwood, or elsewhere, to fabricate pike-heads.

Charost liked the proposal almost as little as the Bishop did. As a soldier, he despised the service of pike-men against regular troops; as a man, he hated the use to which these weapons might be applied by the robber and the murderer. But it was not his place to throw obstacles in the way of any offer to advance the common cause. He contented himself therefore with applauding the zeal of the people, who, he said, should have leave to use Mr. Kirkwood's iron, as soon as there was an absolute need of making free with that gentleman's property, but advised them

to

to try first whether they could not get iron enough in an honest way, by converting into pike-heads what they had at home of that material, their own forks and other implements of husbandry. The answer was taken in good part, and saved the stores for the present. But as pikes were not forbidden, all the smiths and carpenters were presently set to work at making them, and every thief was busy in supplying materials for them. Pitch-forks were lawful prize from that day forth; and young trees were more becoming as pike-handles in the grasp of a lover of liberty, than as ornaments to a gentleman's farm. In a short time a body of pike-men was raised, under the direction of the officer above-mentioned, which receiving daily accessions of numbers, became the more formidable to peaceful people, because they carried their weapons every where, did no regular military duty, and mixed in every tumultuous assembly with a superior aptness for mischief.

Precarious as the state of things at this time evidently was, it created surprize to observe, that the country folk had the hardiness to continue bringing their goods to the market, where they found a ready sale. Charost availed himself of his power, only to take the weightier articles of provision;

provision; from the lower class of people he drew little or nothing without paying for it. Of course, what ready money he had brought with him, which did not exceed forty louis, was soon expended. The other officers were poorer than himself, and their pay from home was not to be looked for. In this exigency there was no resource, but in a requisition of money from the district, which enjoyed the benefit of the French protection. The Bishop was applied to for a list of names of persons most competent to contribute. His answer was, that he saw no objection either to the demand itself, or the quantum, which was fifty guineas, and that he should himself pay one-fifth of the contribution; but he desired to be excused from the business of assessing the other inhabitants, as he was too new a comer to be acquainted with their circumstances. Mr. Devitt, their new magistrate, occurred as the person most likely to execute the business for them. Presently comes a translated letter from the commandant to the citizen magistrate Devitt, *inviting* him 'to entreat the town and district of 'Killalla to shew, by their contributions, their 'zeal for the glorious cause of the people. Some 'had come forward already with presents of mo-'ney; and the writer doubted not, but many 'would

'would be ready to imitate the good example.
'An exact register should be kept of the names
'and the sums subscribed, and the French Go-
'vernment only asked it under the name of a *loan*.'
With some delay and grumbling the sum was raised at last, a good part of which remained in the hands of Mrs. Stock, till it proved a seasonable supply to Charost and his companions, when they were ordered away to Dublin.

About this time O'Donnel, the young man mentioned above as having helped to protect Mr. Kirkwood in Erris, came to Killala, with no other view, as he pretended, than to offer his services in preserving the peace of the town by exerting his influence over the mountaineers of his own district. To this object he seemed for some time to confine his attention, and gained so upon the Commandant by an appearance of sense and activity, that he was presently appointed to the office of Town-Major, with a command over the nightly watch. It is possible, he did not mean at first to accept any military commission from the French; but having a large share of vanity in his composition, and feeling himself grow into consequence among the rebels by comparison with their drunken General Bellew, he aspired to his place, and in fact (though never formally) succeeded to it, after the

the other was turned out. Charost had more than once occasion, in the sequel, to repent of having placed a confidence in this man before he had time to know his character. The airs the young jackanapes gave himself became every day more troublesome. On pretence that he must have a bed at the castle to take the orders of the Commandant in case of any disturbance at night, he took to himself one of the bed-chambers of the middle floor, from which it was not possible afterwards to dislodge him; and this apartment he was pleased to distinguish by the name of *his* room. His next attempt was to be admitted to mess with the family; but here he failed of success. The Bishop, disgusted with his forwardness and vulgar manners, avoided as much as he could all intercourse with him, and when he did ask him to sit down at his table (as at times he could scarcely help doing so without rudeness) it was evidently the result of constraint; so that Mr. O'Donnel kept himself at a distance for the most part, but complained much of the ingratitude with which he was treated, after his great services in protecting the Bishop and his family. The presence of such a lodger taught the people at the castle to feel for the situation of their neighbours of the town, annoyed, as they were known to be, by company

company of a still coarser mold. Day and night the stair-case was infested with O'Donnel's levee, either with drunken boors from Erris, or his own kinsfolk the Macguires of Crosmalina, the principal of whom was a brewer of some substance, who for his good services to France by engaging himself and three or four sons in this rebellion, has lately been requited with a halter. His sons, strong brutes without mind or manners, but by aid of pillage provided with good clothes and arms, were back and forward at Killalla, concerting measures with their cousin O'Donnel, and, indeed, helping to make him less odious, when his behaviour was viewed in comparison with theirs. One of the Macguires, under colour of delivering a message to the Commandant, had the insolence one day to thrust himself into the dining parlour, while the family were at dinner, and seemed to enjoy the alarm which his saucy countenance, his sword and pistols, occasioned among the ladies. The Commandant instantly ordered him to leave the room, with a sharp rebuke for his presumption, declaring at the same time, that there were two hours of the twenty-four which he would not suffer to be wrested from him by any business whatsoever. Another of these three youths, Roger Macguire, carried himself with so much impertinence

nence in his embassy at Castlebar (to be mentioned presently) as would have drawn destruction on his own head, if the safety of better people had not happened at that time to be included in his.

Disagreeable as an inmate, O'Donnel was not, however, without merit as an officer, and a guardian of the public peace. His first exertions were directed to preventing waste by the unnecessary slaughter of beasts. To supply the rebel camp, sheep and oxen had been driven in daily in such numbers, and with so little attention to economy, that as there was very little salt to be had, and the weather was rather warm, it was found necessary to bury many joints of fresh meat in the earth to prevent an infection. Of this abuse the Commandant and the Bishop were eyewitnesses one morning, being led to a back-yard in the town where lay the carcases of half a dozen bullocks just killed. O'Donnel received orders to lay before the magistrate Devitt, regular accounts of what fresh meat would be wanted by the troops on permanent duty. The magistrate was to issue a requisition for the supply demanded, sending a guard to take so much from the farmers, and no more. The beasts were to be taken to one particular spot, appointed for killing them: and proclamation was made, that any person, caught in driving and killing, without

a written

a written order from the magistrate, should be instantly shot. By the vigilance of O'Donnel the order was tolerably well obeyed, though the consumption after all was certainly very great.

It was a novel situation to the Bishop to be forced to subsist on plunder, both of meat and drink. The choicest beef and mutton from grazing grounds that feed the boast of the markets of Dublin, excellent wines and spirits extracted from the cellars of his very good friends the neighbouring gentry, made their visits in due order at the castle, and were received, at first with groans and lamentations over the times, and at last with great equanimity, as a misfortune that could not be helped. At times, the company at the castle even felt a disposition to be merry on the arrival of one of these felonious cargoes. Some bottles of excellent hock, drawn from the cellars of the Right Hon. Colonel King at Ballina, came as a present from the French officer there to M. Charost. The wine on trial was found so good, that conscience began to mutter at the sin of assisting in the robbery of so hospitable a gentleman as the owner must have been, unless he might be proved guilty of some crime. He was therefore formally indicted for *loyalty*, for an obstinate adherence to his Sovereign, and to the constitution under which he

was

was born. The charge was easily proved, as Colonel King was then just recovering from a shot through the body, which he had received at the battle of New Ross, fighting stoutly at the head of his regiment against the United Irishmen, the meritorious allies of France, and lovers of revolution. Of course he was pronounced *guilty* with acclamations, and his wine was confiscated without a dissenting voice.

The confusion of the times had unavoidably suspended the exercise of public worship by the members of the established church. On the LORD's day, a considerable number from the town used to venture into the castle to join the family there at devotions, offered up with a seriousness and fervency suitable to the present distress. The worthy minister of the parish, Dean Thompson, went through the church service, assisted by his curate; the Bishop preached. We all found by experience, both lay and clergy, the truth of the Psalmist's declaration, *It is good for me that I have been in affliction.* Happy, if we shall be enabled by the Divine aid, through the varying scenes of our future life, to retain the good feelings, and practise the lessons, which that awful period impressed upon us! Prayers were offering at the castle on the 9th of September, when the congre-

gation

gation was alarmed by hearing the sound of the cathedral bell. On inquiry it was found, that Mr. O'Donnel had taken the key of the church out of the sexton's house, and ordered the bell to be rung for the purpose of calling his Roman catholic followers to mass in the house of Mr. Morrison, a protestant merchant, who with his family, was forced to witness the ceremony. The Bishop was determined not to overlook such an encroachment. He went, immediately after divine service, to O'Donnel, expostulated calmly with him on an action which must awake the jealousy of the established church for the safety of what the law had put into their hands, and in conclusion, desired he would return the key, and for the future, give up all thought of using the church bell. With this demand O'Donnel, apparently softened by the manner in which it was urged, complied ; nor was any attempt afterwards actually made on the cathedral by the Romanists, though in the camp they often expressed a resolution to seize upon it. The presence of the French always restrained them.

Indeed, the contrast with regard to religious sentiments, between the French and their Irish allies, was extremely curious. The atheist despised and affronted the bigot ; but the wonder

was,

was, how the zealous papist should come to any terms of agreement with a set of men, who boasted openly in our hearing, 'that they had just driven 'Mr. Pope out of Italy, and did not expect to 'find him again so suddenly in Ireland.' It astonished the French officers to hear the recruits, when they offered their service, declare, 'that they 'were come to take arms for France, and *the* '*Blessed Virgin.*' The conduct of the several priests, who engaged in the same treasonable enterprise, was yet more surprising than that of their people. No set of men could be treated with more apparent marks of dislike, and even contempt, than these were by the French, though against the plainest suggestions of policy, which recommended attention to them, both as having an influence over their flocks, and as useful interpreters, most of them (from their foreign education,) being able to speak a little French. Yet the Commandant would not trust to their interpretation: if he wanted to know the truth, he waited till he could see the Bishop. A hare-brained priest of the name of Sweeney had escaped along with Boudet from Newport, when it was retaken, apprehensive of the punishment which afterwards overtook the poor wretch for the active part he had adopted in exciting his parishioners to rebellion.

rebellion. The man had a smattering of science, particularly in the antiquities of his country, of which he seemed to be passionately fond. On being introduced by Boudet to the Commandant, he preferred an humble request to that officer, that whereas every thing lat·ly belonging to the protestants must now be French property, and inasmuch as soldiers were not usually covetous of books, he should be extremely obliged to M. Charost, if he would make him a present of the Bishop of Killala's library. 'The Bishop's library!' answered Charost, turning from him with contempt, 'is just as much his own now, as ever it was.'

What powerful motive could prevail on this order of men to lend their hearts and hands to a revolution, which so manifestly threatened to overwhelm their own credit and consequence, supposing even that they were indifferent to the fate of that religion of which they professed themselves to be the consecrated ministers? I will tell the Reader what I conceive to be the true key to this mystery, if I may have his pardon for the digression.

The almost total dependence of the Romish clergy of Ireland upon their people for the means of subsistence is the cause, according to my best judgment,

judgment, why, upon every popular commotion, many priests of that communion have been, and until measures of better policy are adopted, always will be found in the ranks of sedition and opposition to the established government. The peasant will love a revolution, because he feels the weight of poverty, and has not often the sense to perceive that a change of masters may render it heavier: the priest must follow the impulse of the popular wave, or be left behind on the beach, to perish. There was a time indeed, when superstition was of force to uphold the credit and revenues of the church of Rome, even where convulsions shook to pieces the fabric of civil government. But the reign of superstition is either past, or passing: at least if it holds the *mind* of the believer, it is not, by many degrees, so effectual as formerly to open his *purse*. Holy oil, and indulgences, and absolutions have fallen very much in their price; confessions are, comparatively speaking, unproductive; and even the golden mine of purgatory seems to be running to a thread. Voluntary contribution, the main resource of the priest, must depend on his popularity. 'Live with me, and 'live as I do. Oppress me not with superior 'learning or refinement. Take thankfully what I 'choose to give you, and earn it by compliance

'with my political creed and conduct'—such, when jusly translated, is the language of the Irish cottager to his priest. It is language which will be listened to in proportion to the exigency of the case. A sturdy moralist will do his duty in despite of penury: admirable, and not to be looked for among the common herd of mankind, is the virtue, which can withstand the menace of absolute want of bread. The remedy for this defect in the present political system of Ireland should seem to be as easy, as it is obvious. But it is not for a private individual to suggest to our enlightened Legislature either the time or the measure, in which such a remedy ought to be applied.

Although the cathedral church of Killalla escaped violence in the manner related, there was scarcely another protestant place of worship throughout the united dioceses, that did not quickly bear evident marks of the religious intolerance of the rebels. But their malice was principally directed against a presbyterian meeting-house between Killalla and Ballina, the only one of the kind, I believe, in the county. It had lately been fitted up and decently ornamented by the unwearied exertions of the minister, the Rev. Mr. Marshall, whose exemplary character had entitled him to so much respect, that all his protestant

neighbours without distinction had contributed to give him a handsome place of worship. In a very short time after the commencement of the rebellion, nothing remained of the meeting-house except the walls. The congregation experienced no better treatment than their temple. They were a colony of very industrious weavers from the North, translated hither some years back by the Earl of Arran to a village of his, called Mullifarragh, where they had flourished so much, that they were grown rich, and had increased to the number of a thousand persons. The name of Orangemen had but just begun to be heard of in Connaught; and much it were to be wished, that no such society had ever appeared among us, to furnish to the Romanists too plausible a pretext for alarm and hostility against their protestant brethren. The Bishop had opposed their establishment with all his might. On the very day when the invasion happened, he was busied in entering a protest, in his primary visitation charge, against the first sentence of the oath by which Orangemen are united together, 'I am not a Roman catholic.' The words sounded in his ears too much like those in the Prophet, *Stand off, I am holier than thou*; and assuredly they are not calculated to conciliate. The society had originated in the same northern

county, which some years before had disgraced itself by an infamy new to protestants, an actual expulsion of Roman catholics from their homes. The perpetrators of this lawless deed were supposed to be chiefly presbyterians; and now upon the unoffending people of that persuasion in Connaught were to be retaliated the injuries done to the Romanists in Ulster. The village of Mullifarragh, on pretence of searching for arms, was ransacked in three nocturnal invasions of the rebels, till there was nothing left in it worth carrying away; and this in defiance of a protection under the hand of the Commandant, obtained for them and their pastor by the Bishop. The poor sufferers came in tears to M. Charost, to return him a protection which had done them no good. It shocked him very much. Often did he whisper the Bishop, that no consideration should prevail on him again to trust himself to such a horde of savages as the Irish.

The cloud of common suffering makes the features of distinction between protestants, in the matter of religion, appear as nothing. Mr. Marshall, having lost his own chapel, readily and devoutly joined us in our worship. Service being ended, he informed us, that the people of Sligo, after a smart action or two at Colooney on the preceding

preceding Thursday, had succeeded in turning the French from their own town towards the county of Leitrim, where it was probable they would meet a force from Enniskillen and Dublin, that would be able to give a good account of them. Castlebar, Newport-Pratt, and Westport, he assured us, were recovered, and nothing remained in the hands of the enemy but our town and Ballina. The joy of this news was presently dashed with the reflection, that if the French should push on, and be defeated at length in some place far removed from us, we must be left, absolutely destitute of defence, at the mercy of rebels irritated by despair, and for a space of time quite sufficient to accomplish our destruction. The danger was felt and acknowledged; but as we could not by our own foresight or prudence avert it, we cast ourselves for the event on the good pleasure of Him, who knew best what was fitting for us.

Mr. Marshall was the bearer this morning, Sept. 9, of a fresh complaint from his people at Mullifarragh: they had not only been robbed of their goods, but a considerable number of them had been carried prisoners to Ballina for the alledged crime of being Orangemen, where, by permission of the French officer Truc, they remained close prisoners, with scarcely any thing

for

for their support. This behaviour of Truc much displeased the Commandant, as he had straitly charged that officer not to listen to accusations on a religious account, nor suffer any person to be confined for them. He thought it incumbent on him therefore to go immediately to Ballina to rectify matters there, and enforce a better execution of his orders, which he did, taking Ponson along with him. The business employed him the whole day, as he had above sixty prisoners to examine and discharge. During his absence, the loyalists at Killalla had not been very easy in their minds, committed as they were to the protection of M. Boudet only, and on the day of the week when danger was most to be apprehended, from the confluence of people out of the country to their prayers.

Nothing, however, of an unpleasant nature occurred this or the two following days, except the usual annoyance from lies of the approach of an enemy, fabricated by the rebels to colour their importunity for ammunition. Seven hundred and fifty recruits were counted before the castle gate on the 11th, who came to offer their services for retaking the neighbouring towns that had returned to their allegiance; and this, after arms had been delivered out by the French, as I mentioned

tioned before, to upwards of five thousand. The population in the mountainous parts of the county of Mayo much exceeds what the country, from its haggard appearance, would be thought capable of sustaining. These last recruits were extremely urgent to cut down two ash groves, planted to screen the see-house from the winds that blow with so much fury in this climate. Pikes they must have, they said, since they were not supplied with other weapons; but they paid the Bishop the compliment of promising to spare his trees, if he would only get them leave from the Commandant to cut down those that belonged to his neighbour Roger Palmer, Esq. or to the agent of that gentleman, Sir John Edm. Browne, who seemed to be very unpopular among them. With much difficulty, and with the sacrifice of three or four very good trees, they were prevailed upon to desist at that time from further mischief.

September 12 and 13, the messengers of ill news poured in upon us continually, announcing fresh depredations on every side. Castlereagh, the seat of Arthur Knox, Esq. (brother in law to the Earl of Meath) Castle Lacken, the property of Sir John Palmer, Bart. were broke open and completely rifled. Mr. John Bourke of Summerhill informed the Bishop by message, that he was threatened

threatened grievously, and in danger of murder, if he was not supplied presently with a guard and ammunition: he added in his note, that he had cash in the house, which he wished to have conveyed to the castle. A faithful domestick of Mr. Knox's came with tears in his eyes to to Bishop to beg he would send a party of men to Castlereagh, to snatch up what might yet be rescued from the spoilers, particularly a quantity of wine, spirits, and groceries, which, if they must be lost to his master, had better go to the use of the garrison in the castle, than to a parcel of ruffians.

The want of horses was now felt severely. The Bishop had but one left, which had been sent back to him by the French from Castlebar. This was dispatched with a car to Castlereagh, together with a party under O'Donnel, to bring off what goods he could to the castle. Another horse was found somewhere, to convey M. Boudet to Summerhill; and as he could effect nothing without an interpreter, the Bishop, much against his will, was obliged to trust his eldest son with this officer, through a country rendered almost as dangerous as a field of battle by the inconsiderate firing of shots by the rebels in all directions. The pair walked and rode by turns, and a very unpleasant suspence prevailed at the castle till their return

late in the evening. By their appearance at Summerhill quiet was for the present restored to that place. Boudet rendered honourable testimony to the spirit, with which Mr. Bourke defended his property against a host of marauders. But the Bishop trembled at the hazard his son Edwin had incurred, when Mr. Bourke prevailed on him to be the bearer to the castle of 170 guineas in cash.

While this was passing, all was confusion in the lower part of the castle, by the condition in which the party returned that had gone to Castlereagh. No expedient for saving the wine and spirits from the unworthy mouths that were preparing to swallow them appeared to the messengers to be so ready and effectual, as that of using the liquors instantly themselves. In consequence, the Bishop's butler returned from the expedition pot-valiant, quarrelled with the gardner and carter, presented a blunderbuss at the former, and provoked the Bishop himself so much by saucy language, that he lost his temper, and almost knocked the fellow down with a box on the ear. The Commandant interposing, locked him up in his own pantry, and left him to sleep there till morning. The man had been an excellent servant, and it is hoped will continue to be so in a place of

less

less temptation. But the opportunity of gaining by the arrival of the French was too alluring: he declared for them immediately, served them only, to the neglecting of his master, betrayed the secrets of the cellar to them, talked often like a rebel, and in short did such things, as might have brought his neck in question, if his master had not, after the action at Killalla, recommended to him a speedy retreat out of the country. Some liquor, the groceries, and a quantity of furniture, the property of Mr. John Knox, were safely deposited in the castle.

From Castle Lacken little or nothing could be saved. The manner in which this mansion, the old family seat of Sir John Palmer, was surprised, is worth describing. Mr. Waldron, agent to the baronet, who rented the house, and had a very considerable property in and about it, had received a guard from the French, with which for some days he had been able to protect himself against his disorderly neighbours. The guards however required guarding as much as the rest of their countrymen; and a plan was concerted, in consequence of which the house should appear to be taken by a sudden assault, in spite of all opposition. A horseman came in full gallop through the surrounding crowd to the door, announcing himself

himself to be an express from the Bishop at Killalla. The unwary owner unbarred his door, and in an instant the mob without and the guards within threw the unfortunate man on the floor, ran over him many times, dispersed his affrighted family of children and grandchildren, completely gutted the house, and even carried away the flooring, drove off his stock, and in short did him damage (as he afterwards proved to the committee) little short of 3000l. It was truly melancholy to see a whole family, accustomed to ease and comfort, arrive the next day at Killalla on foot, with nothing saved but the clothes on their backs. But this was a spectacle, to which we had now been too much familiarized. Mr. Waldron had another house and farm in the vicinity, which were presently after destroyed in as merciless a manner by the same savages.

The farm-house of Mr. John Boyd (a worthy man, respectable also for his skill as a surveyor) though greatly exposed by standing single at a considerable distance from the town, was preserved by a circumstance that may be reckoned curious, as it shews the light in which the insurgents beheld their French allies. Two soldiers of that nation, wounded, but not dangerously, at Castlebar, were sent to the Commandant to be put into some

some place where they might be recovered. Mr. Boyd, by the Bishop's advice, offered his own house as a quiet retreat for the men, who at the same time, from the respect paid by the rebels to the French, might be a security to him and his family. The offer was accepted, and proved effectual for the purpose intended; for though gangs of robbers frequently threatened the house, no attack was actually made on it, as long as the foreigners (very well behaved poor fellows) continued in it, which was for upwards of a fortnight. It cost much exertion afterwards to defend the same house to the end of the troubles.

Sept. 12th, in the evening, the light of hope began to open on the loyalists of Killalla. Something must have happened, they whispered one another, to the prejudice of the French arms, as an express arrived from Ballina, and was sent back in wet and darkness almost immediately: the French officers also, from that time, looked very much dejected. Next morning, a prisoner was brought in from Ballina, supposed to be of note, because the Commandant wished the Bishop to be pressent at his examination.

It proved to be William Charles Fortescue, Esq. nephew and heir to Lord Clermont, and member for the county of Louth, a gentleman with whom the

the Bishop had not the honour of being before acquainted. The conversation between him and M. Charost passing in the French language, and in a low tone of voice, the Bishop was on the point of quitting the room, when Mr. Fortescue announced himself in English to be the brother of the young clergyman already mentioned, as having received a mortal wound in the first rencounter with the French. No certain intelligence of his death had reached Dublin; so that Mr. F. was instigated by affection for an excellent and only brother to set out on horseback for Ballina, attended by one servant, resolved to take his chance, if that town should yet be in the hands of the rebels, though, when he left the capital, it was believed to have returned, along with the rest of the county, to the king's peace. On his way he had passed through Granard, just after the battle of Ballinamuck, where he had seen General Humbert and his officers, going as prisoners of war to Dublin; and even then he had no intimation, that he might not proceed without danger as far as Ballina. He did not discover his mistake, till he was arrested by a patrole within a short distance from that town. The commanding officer there, M. Truc, with his usual brutality charged him with coming there as a spy to intimidate the friends

friends of liberty by a false report of the defeat of their army, detained the servant and baggage, and sent the master to Killalla to be examined by Charost. From the description Mr. Fortescue gave him of the persons of the French officers whom he had seen prisoners, the Commandant could have no doubt of the defeat of his countrymen, even though he had not been furnished with a more convincing proof by the receipt of two letters from officers in the French army, stating the capture of their whole force near the iron mines in the county of Leitrim, together with the dispersion of their Irish allies, on the Saturday preceding.

These letters the Commandant made no scruple of imparting to the Bishop, with an air of confidence in his honour, and his discretion, which was certainly very flattering. He gave him leave at the same time to discourse on the subject with Mr. Fortescue, only admonishing them both of the present danger of divulging the secret. Of such a caution, in truth, they stood in very little need: for it was plainly the interest of the loyalists to observe the strictest silence with regard to the ill posture of the affairs of the rebels, lest these should be on their backs before the King's army could come to their relief. Mr. Fortescue was taking his leave of the Commandant to return to his

his disagreeable confinement under Truc, when the Bishop, in French, (that Charost might object, if he pleased) invited him to share bed and board with them at the castle, an offer which, after some apologies, was thankfully accepted, and Mr. Fortescue's condition, though far inferior to that he was used to, became easy from thenceforth in comparison of what he had endured at Ballina. The presence of this gentleman was of great service in supporting the spirits of the company at the castle; for, having attained to the rank of Major in the army, he possessed a steadiness of mind in danger, and a prudence, the result of experience, which often suggested the most salutary counsels.

Concealment of the news from Ballinamuck was not long practicable. People who had escaped from the slaughter came in hourly to offer their services to the Commandant, though several of them carried in their persons evident marks how little they had gained by their zeal for the cause. The intelligence did not seem by any means to produce on the minds of the rebels the effect that might naturally have been expected, their gradual dispersion and return to their own homes. On the contrary, the resort to the camp in the Bishop's meadows grew greater every day; the talk of vengeance

vengeance on the protestants was louder and more frequent; the rebels were drilled regularly, ammunition was demanded, and every preparation made for an obstinate defence against the arms of their Sovereign. Careless of the future, or trusting to the delay which must be occasioned by the distance of the King's army, they thought of nothing but living merrily, as long as they might, upon the property that lay at their mercy; and they did use their power of doing mischief most terribly. Spoil was not the sole, or even the principal, object of their leaders; for they destroyed in every decent habitation much more than they carried away. Depression of the industrious and better sort, the universal levelling of conditions, in order to bring on the glorious reign of equality, such appeared to be the wish of those who aspired at all to the praise of thinking, and called themselves *republicans:* the mob had no prompters but lust of pillage and superstition. For, that enmity to the protestant religion entered into the motives of the devastation in Connaught, cannot with any shew of reason be denied, since it is notorious that, except during the indiscriminate plunder which took place at the capture of Castlebar, very few instances occurred, throughout the province,

of

of the house or property of a Roman catholic being injured by the rebels.

Very different from those of the natives were the feelings of the French officers at Killalla, after they were assured of the miscarriage of their enterprise. Conceiving their task of annoying Britain to be for the present concluded, and expecting shortly to join their brother officers in Dublin, they looked to nothing but to the preserving of peace and quiet round about them, till a regular English force should approach, to which they might, without discredit, render themselves prisoners. They did not, indeed, profess so much to the rebels. On the contrary, they appeared always ready to train the men to arms, and to head them in any enterprise they proposed against the common enemy. But at the same time the Commandant frequently warned them, that he would have no hand in incursions for pillage: 'he was *Chef de Brigade*,' he said, 'but not *Chef de Brigands*;' and if ever he caught them preparing to spoil and murder protestants, he and his officers should side with the protestants against them to the very last extremity. He took extraordinary care also to be provided against the worst. Twelve good carabines, properly loaded, stood always ready in the bed-chamber where the three officers

slept. Arms were distributed to seven or eight trusty persons of the Bishop's family. A guard of eighteen (whom, as I said, it was necessary to keep an eye upon) watched in and around the house. The Frenchmen themselves were extremely alert, allowing themselves very little sleep, and scarcely any in the night, for ten days together. The steady undisturbed countenance of Charost added weight to his preparations.

The 18th of September was a day of continual alarm. Reports from the rebel camp just beside us grew stronger than ever, that a mutiny was breaking out. About three o'clock, as the Bishop and Commandant were walking in the garden, one of the leaders of the rebels came in a great hurry to assure them, it was the determined purpose of the camp immediately to imprison, in the cathedral, every protestant as a pledge for their own security, in case of the arrival of the King's army. The man was dismissed with thanks for the warning, and desired to tell his countrymen, 'that we were ready for them.' A good dinner soon after stopt their mouths, as it used to do: for we remarked, that the rebels in camp were always most inclined to cabal, and do mischief, while their dinner was preparing: when they had been regaled with beef and mutton, and a moderate share

share of whiskey, they became good-humoured and tractable.

On the 19th, at noon, they were hungry and quarrelsome again. The Commandant, with a guard of thirty men, marched about the town, proclaiming his orders to the men to go to their homes, immediately after they had received their allowance of beef. While he was thus engaged, a crowd gathered about the gate. The armed began to mutter as well as the unarmed. At laſt the Bishop stept out to them, and asked what they wanted.

They had heard, that many of their kinsmen and friends were in close confinement at Castlebar; and if they thought that was really the case, they could not be blamed for wishing to retaliate on the protestants here.

Are you sure of the fact?—No.

Why then, said the Bishop, would it not be just and prudent to send messengers to Castlebar, whom you could trust, for a true report, before you proceed further?

Right: but who will go on such an errand?

Take one of your own people, replied the Bishop, with one of ours, to go immediately to the Commanding Officer at Castlebar. Let them carry a flag of truce, and a letter from me to Ge-

neral Trench (or other officer commanding there) setting forth our situation, and our hope that nothing would be done to the prisoners at Castlebar which may provoke reprisals on the protestants at Killalla. Disperse now, and you shall have a full and fair statement of things by to-morrow night. Let the persons to go with the flag be Dean Thompson and Mr. Roger Macguire.

With the populace half the work of persuasion is frequently over, when you can get them to listen. The Bishop made the family one day merry by relating what he had just overheard. Two country fellows were disputing and pulling each other by the throat in the court-yard, when one cried to the other, 'Come away to the Bi-'shop, he will settle it for us—he makes us *hear* '*one another*.'

The promised letter was presently written, and received with applause by the mutineers. The choice of ambassadors was likewise ratified by general consent; for young Macguire was an active partizan of the rebels, and Dean Thompson's character stood high in the estimation of all descriptions of people, and his influence at Castlebar, where he had been curate for nineteen years, was known to be equal to his merit. It was agreed, that the messengers should set out for Castlebar at

four the next morning, and till they returned, nothing should be attempted.

It was a great exertion for Dean Thompson to undertake this perilous errand, and greater on the part of his wife to consent to it. The mountain road was to be taken to Castlebar, as the shortest; but it was a wild country, swarming with robbers; neither was it at all certain, that the protestant messenger would not be arrested on the way by the friends of Macguire, who might have consented to the embassy only to get such a person as the Dean into their hands. If *he* was justly uneasy, his lady was still more to be pitied, encumbered as she was with the charge of four young children, and far advanced in her pregnancy.* But this worthy couple, seeing no measure so likely as the proposed one to rescue themselves and their friends, acquiesced in it without a murmur, and committed the issue to Providence.

Mysterious are the ways of Divine Providence! unfathomable the depths of that wisdom, which often concedes a boon, only to try us afterwards

* Mrs. Thompson's strength of affection for her husband did not escape the penetration even of a stranger. At dinner, on the day when the Dean was employed in his dangerous mission, Charost whisphered the Bishop: 'I can see fear agitating the 'frame of that poor woman to the very tips of her fingers.'

by

by withdrawing it! Little didst thou foresee, amiable and unhappy woman, that the husband, whose escape from that peril transported thee with so much joy and gratitude to heaven, should in the succeeding year be torn for ever from thee by a fever, contracted in the course of his ministry by attendance on a sick bed. Be comforted, however. His virtues, though in the mid season of life, had rendered him full ripe for the great harvest. Thou hast it in thy power to earn a splendid recompence hereafter by patience, by attention to thy fatherless offspring!*.

The night of the 19th was past by almost the entire family at the castle without sleep. At midnight, as they were going to rest, one of the Macguires, from Crosmalina, burst in upon them with the news, that his troop had just been fired on by the English, who might be expected at Killalla immediately. It was not probable, that a regular force would be exposed to the chances of an engagement with such a crew in the night; but the story had the same effect as if it was true. The house was up all night, and had the pleasure of listening to the uproar made by the two Macguires,

* Dean Thompson died at Castlebar, November 10th, 1799, after struggling for a month together, with several relapses, under a nervous fever. The Deanery is valued at 500l. per ann.

Roger

Roger and the new-comer, in getting most beastly drunk in their cousin O'Donnel's room, till the Commandant at last cuffed, and turned them both out of doors. In the morning, the false reporter from Crosmalina slipt home again, rather ashamed of himself; but his brother, the doughty Ambassador, could not be found to go on his errand till it was near noon. The Dean and he then set out on horseback, well armed with swords and pistols.

A very troublesome consequence of the report brought by Macguire was, that it furnished a pretence to the pikemen, dismissed the day before by the Commandant, to return to the town with offers of serving against the approaching enemy. In two hours the camp was said to number two thousand men. To do them justice, the peasantry never appeared to want animal courage, for they flocked together to meet danger whenever it was expected. Had it pleased heaven to be as liberal to them of brains as of hands, it is not easy to say to what length of mischief they might have proceeded; but they were all along unprovided with leaders of any ability. Bellew, their earliest officer, was a drunken brute, to whom nobody paid obedience, even before he was turned out of office by the Commandant. Little better, either for ta-

lent or sobriety, was O'Dowd, a man of some estate in the county, and almost the only gentleman that took arms with the rebels, for which he paid the forfeit of his life at Ballinamuck. Mr. Rickard Bourke, of Ballina, before-mentioned, had some military knowledge, was a good drill Serjeant, firm in combat, and popular; so that he might have done the harm he wished, if the habitual stupefaction of drink had not been an overmatch for his malice. O'Donnel knew nothing of arms, nor was he likely to learn the profession quickly, his petulance making him unfit for discipline, insomuch that at one time Charost was forced to lay him under an arrest for some hours for quitting the neighbourhood, the night before, without orders. Yet the vulgar, who can discern in others what they have not in themselves, followed this young man more readily than any other who pretended to lead them, because they saw he had more sense, more command of himself, and more moderation in the exercise of authority. Even the loyalists at Killalla acknowledged obligation to him for the industry with which they saw him exert himself to prevent pillage, patroling the streets on horseback for several nights together, and withholding, both by threats and persuasion, those whom he found bent upon mischief.

There

There were times, when nothing could withhold them but blows. On the 20th, the house of the Custom-house Officer, Mr. Rutledge, was again attacked by a band of ruffians, after it had been three or four times ransacked before. The pretence was, that it contained tobacco, an article of which the country people are so fond, that they bear the want of it more impatiently than that of food. To quell the riot, Ponson was called from a nap he was taking, after being up all night. Alone he fell upon the whole crew, and aiming a blow at the foremost pillager, brought the fellow to the ground, to his infinite dismay; but the effort bent and broke the bayonet. Yet the dastardly assailants were put to the rout by this spirited exertion, and dispersed.

Friday morning, the 21st, brought another disorderly gang to molest the castle. These called themselves a deputation from the camp. They had heard, that Mr. Bourke of Summerhill was fully purposed to employ a guard he had received from the Commandant in harassing the families of his poor neighbours, while the heads of them were fighting for liberty; and they were come to ask leave to take him up. 'You may go, if you 'please,' answered Charost, 'but I will follow 'you with my officers, and fire upon you, if I 'catch

'catch you in the act of plundering Summerhill.' The affair was compromised by O'Donnel's going over to Summerhill with a letter to Mr. Bourke from the Commandant, to warn him that he should content himself with acting on the defensive only, as he expected to have his guard left with him. Mr. Bourke needed no such warning, for he had never trusted the guard within his doors. What provoked the commonalty so much against this gentleman was the thought, that he should have it to boast he had set the whole body of United Irish at defiance for a month together. Even O'Donnel did not like to give him such matter of triumph.

After breakfast the same day, the Bishop went into the town with M. Charost, to assist him in ordering a newly-arrived body of pikemen to go home to their harvest. It was a service of danger. About one hundred surly looking fellows were to be told, that the Commandant had men enough to guard the place (which was now his only business here) and did not desire to be troubled with a pack of robbers. Charost begged his interpreter to signify this to the people in words of *command*, such as would leave no doubt or dispute about his meaning; and Ponson, to enforce the order, pursued the rear of the body with his firelock, with

expressions

expressions of contempt and anger so ridiculous, as to provoke the smiles of the loyalists, though plainly contrary to prudence. The pikemen muttered threats, as they retired, both against the protestants and their abettors, as they called the French; and from that time accounts came in hourly, that they were resolved not to disperse, as they were ordered to do, but would choose new leaders, and plunder the town that very evening, in spite of the French and of O'Donnel. They seemed to wait only for the return of the Ambassadors, whose arrival was indeed anxiously expected by all parties.

At four o'clock the castle family had a message, just before dinner, from an eyewitness, that the kings army were advancing in great numbers, and by two roads from Castlebar. They must be at Ballina, it was said, by this time. Dinner was laid on the table, notwithstanding. In the midst of it, in rushed Thomas Kirkwood, a young officer of yeoman cavalry, with news that the attack on our front gate was commencing by about a score of armed men. Such a number did not frighten us. 'Stay till they get to a head,' says the Commandant. We drank away, till they had increased to near fifty. Then the Commandant took his hat, and marching out with his two officers

cers fully armed, he steps forward to the pikemen, orders them to retire from the musqueteers, divides the latter into three platoons, and sets them directly to go through their execise. Occupied for some time with these movements, they had not leisure to apply themselves to worse, and thus were easily persuaded at last to disperse.

A loud shout at six in the evening proclaimed the safe return of our two Ambassadors. Great was the joy of the whole town at the sight of them, when we had begun to despair of their appearance, at least before morning. They brought back a very polite letter to the Bishop from General Trench, assuring him that his prisoners were, and should be, treated with all possible tenderness and humanity. The letter was publicly read to the multitude, and left in their hands. No disturbance ensued that night; but the trepidation was so great, that the castle could scarcely contain the refugees. Not fewer than fourscore persons were housed in it. Nine of these, including Mr. Forteseue, slept on the floor of the Bishop's study. In their own bedchamber the Bishop and his lady were obliged to find room for four little children of their own, and as many more of a neighbour, together with their terrified mother.

Fear,

Fear, we know, is a passion not much troubled with qualms of delicacy.

Our mission to Castlebar had the effect that was foreseen and wished. Dean Thompson, though closely watched by his fellow-messenger, as long as the latter was able to keep himself awake, found means to have a private conference with General Trench, in which he painted to him the desperate situation of the loyalists at Killalla in so strong a light, that the General promised to march to our relief two days sooner than he had purposed to do, and desired him to tell the Bishop, but with a strict injunction of secrecy, that he might expect his army by Sunday forenoon. Arthur Stock sent his father a note, that he was very well and happy at Castlebar, and hoped to be with us shortly. The Bishop shook his head, as if he doubted much whether his son should find us alive.

In effect the whole interval of time between General Trench's promise and its completion was a period of keener anxiety, than is commonly crowded into an equal space any in man's life. Clamour, and then a silence more terrible than clamour, reigned by turns in and about the castle. Our guards cast their eyes upon us with an uncertainty truly alarming; they seemed to hesitate, whether they should plunge the bayonet in our breasts,

breasts, or fall on their knees to implore our protection. *Diversis animorum motibus, pavebant, terrebantque,** as the Roman historian has strongly delineated a situation not unlike ours.

Early on Saturday morning, the loyalists were desired by the rebels to come up with them to the hill on which the needle-tower is built, in order to be eye witnesses of the havock a party of the King's army was making, as it advanced towards us from Sligo. A train of fire too clearly distinguished their line of march, flaming up from the houses of unfortunate Peasants. 'They are only a few cabins,' remarked the Bishop; and he had scarcely uttered the words, when he felt the imprudence of them. 'A poor man's cabin,' answered one of the rebels, is to him as 'valuable as a palace.' Presently after comes a Priest from Easky bridge in that Country, named Macdonald, with intelligence apparently calculated to quiet their minds: 'it was only a few farm-'houses that had been burned, because they 'belonged to noted pillagers.' This he said in publick; many believed at the time, that he told a different story privately to those of his communion. O'Donnel, the busiest of all men this

* Tacit. Ann. I. 25. *By turns, as their passions rolled, they felt terror, and inspired it.*

day, made an offer of his service: he would go at the head of a party, and bring back information to be relied on. The people were silent. They did not know whom to trust. The Captain might be as bad as the Priest. All were looking to self-preservation, except the dregs of the commonalty that longed for pillage.

At three o'clock, the report of cannon and small arms towards Ballina could plainly be heard in the town; the very flash of the artillery was discerned from the Steeple-hill. The Commandant was on horseback among the pikemen, whose Captains he found busy in framing resolutions for an obstinate defence. The guard at the gate began now to slip away, mindful only of their own safety, and leaving to the mercy of every invader the family that had fed, and for the last seven days had also paid them for their attendance, at the rate of two guineas a day. For on a complaint from their Captain O'Donnel, that his men thought it very hard to be detained on military duty at a time when they could each earn above a shilling a day at the harvest, the Bishop had agreed to pay the ordinary guard of the town, consisting of fifty men, ten pence per man for one week, leaving the same burden to be sustained by the townspeople for the week immediately following;

ing; and the guard, that now were melting from him, had received their first week's pay. Some of the poor fellows, however, continued on their post to the last. During the whole of Saturday morning the castle was more still and quiet, than, at any time since the invasion, it had been even at midnight.

The hour of dinner was not equally tranquil. As the cloth was removing, O'Donnel joins the company to take a solemn leave of us, being on the point, he said, of leading his men, at their own desire, to Ballina. He takes one glass, filled out for him by Mrs. Stock, commends us to heaven, and disappears. In five minutes, the parlour door flies open with a crash; the Bishop's gardener enters exclaiming, 'Captain O'Donnel is dead! 'he has been this moment killed by one of his 'own men.' At his back follows Mr. Marshall, the Presbyterian Minister, who with arms extended, and every symptom of terror, screeches out, 'Captain O'Donnel is dead! I saw him this 'instant pulled from his horse, and killed!'

'Thank you, Mr. Marshall,' said the Dean, looking at his affrighted wife, in her then condition; 'you have done your best to kill more 'than one of us.'

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The Bishop also was hurt by this unguarded action of Mr. Marshall, and with some sharpness expressed a wish 'that he could defend his family 'from the intrusion of ill news, at least at meal 'times.' The poor man looked so mortified at the reproof, that the blow recoiled instantly on him that gave it. Mr. M. withdrew—but the Bishop sought him out soon after, and asked and obtained his pardon.

All rose to inquire about O'Donnel. He was found in the yard with only a slight wound in the back of his hand. A drunken fellow had resisted his orders, when he desired his men to march, and being struck with a pistol, fell, and pulled the Captain off his horse upon his back on the ground. O'Donnel was on his feet in a moment, and with the butt end of his pistol laid open the skull of the offender, whom he left in the guard-room. He himself was soon in a condition to resume his march, and away he went with about three hundred followers, taking the road to Crosmalina. Ponson, who was sent out to reconnoitre, now came back with news, that the English were within four miles of Killalla; and with this the inconsiderate creature betook himself to his customary employment of singing and whistling.

The night was uncommonly wet, which con-

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tributed to our quiet. Favourable in this respect, the season was much against us in another; for it retarded the march of our deliverers, to that degree, that General Trench was not able to keep his promise of being with us in the forenoon of next day, having found it necessary to encamp for the night at Crosmalina. Here an alarm, and some confusion among the King's troops, was occasioned by their picquet of sixteen horse falling in with young Macguire, who with two horsemen had advanced about a mile before O'Donnel's men from Killalla, and came up with the picquet after night fall. Macguire boldly charged them, fired his pistol, and followed them into the very town, assisted by the darkness, till on hearing the drums beat to arms, he thought it prudent to retire. His cousin O'Donnel had committed the charge of his party to this youth, being himself unable to proceed on the march farther than Rappagh, the seat of Mr. Knox, where a sickness at stomach overtook him, which forced him to accept a bed from young Mr. Knox, after he had procured from that gentleman a drink for his three hundred men. On the strength of this liquor the rebels bore the fatigue of a rainy march very well, till Macguire, their vaunt courier, brought them word that the Royal army was beating to arms at Crosmalina.

Then for the first time they began to recollect, that they had too little ammunition to stand a regular engagement. So they took counsel from their leader (or their fears) and listening with pleasure to the salutary word 'Retreat,' they broke, and made the best of their way, most of them, to their own homes: about thirty of the stoutest were collected in the morning by O'Donnel, who led them back to Killalla.

On this night, as well as for the nine that preceded it, the gentlemen that slept in the library took their turns at watching till morning for the common safety, and visiting the guards posted through the house. All were harassed by a duty so fatiguing, but the French officers most, who for several nights together did not enjoy an hour's repose. The family spoke in whispers one to another, some desponding, some blaming the tardiness of Government in sending us relief, some inquiring anxiously for news, and some endeavouring to steal into privacy, where they might unload their hearts with freedom before the Throne of Mercy.

The 23d of September, Sunday, and the day of the equinox, opened on us with the same heavy fall of rain which had continued throughout the night; but the sky cleared before noon. At breakfast our company was enlarged by the addi-

tion of two fugitive Officers from Ballina, Messrs. Truc and O'Keon. 'The English were come to 'Ballina. What man could do, the heroick Truc 'had atchieved. An English Officer had sum-'moned him to render himself prisoner, and ad-'vanced to lay hold of him; but he shook him 'off, and in the struggle pulled away the Officer's 'epaulette,' which he produced in triumph, 'got 'on horseback, and with O'Keon, whom he over-'took on the road, was come to fight it out to the 'last at Killalla.' This vapouring tale was soon discovered to be a downright lie. Truc, in the confusion when Ballina was entered by the King's troops, had escaped on the first horse he could catch, bringing with him an old volunteer epaulette, the property of Colonel King, and stolen by Truc out of the Colonel's wardrobe.* The appearance of this man corresponded with the character we had heard of him—a front of brass, an incessant fraudful smile, manners altogether vulgar, and in his dress and person a neglect of cleanliness, even beyond the affected negligence of Republicans. Our poor Commandant seemed to like him no better than we did ourselves, though he

* When General Trench was coming up stairs at the Castle to receive the swords of the French Officers, Truc whispered the Bishop, *St! pas un mot de l'epaulette.* 'Mum: not a word of 'the epaulette!'

was

was forced to welcome him at our breakfast with a kiss on each cheek, the modern fraternal embrace ——a sight that would have provoked our smiles, had we been in a humour to be amused. But every thought was now absorbed by the expectation of the approaching scene: even the sacred duties of the day were for the first time suspended.

Before he took horse for the engagement, O'Donnel claimed the privilege of a messmate to ask counsel of Mr. Fortescue and the Bishop what he should do. 'I think I might expect pardon,' said he, 'from the share I have had in preserving 'the peace of this district. But the people would 'never forgive me, if I did not stand by them 'now; and their revenge would follow me into 'Erris, should I attempt to retreat home. I am 'not afraid to die; but if I could save my life with 'honour, I would.' No counsel, it was evident, could be given him, but that he should fight till he saw the battle turn (which, his advisers told him, would not be a long time) and then endeavour to escape to his own Country. The young man followed this advice, as far as he was able. Pushed into the town with the fugitives, he galloped about the streets to bring up a reinforcement, when a spirited mare that he rode was shot under him. He then escaped on foot to the fields

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on the other side from the scene of action, where incumbered as he was with boots and a long French surtout coat, he was soon overtaken, and pierced with a ball through the back. The Highlander that killed him reported his last words to be, 'I 'am Ferdy O'Donnel: go tell the Bishop I am 'shot.' The Bishop was sorry for his death. Harassed as he had been by his forward and pert behaviour, during the long space of time O'Donnel had passed under his roof, an uninvited guest, he could not forget the services he had rendered to the town by frequently hazarding his person to restrain plunderers. The body, which after being stript had been thrown into a potatoe ridge, was by the Bishop's order removed three days after, and interred in the church yard.

The peaceful inhabitants of Killalla were now to be spectators of a scene they had never expected to behold—a battle! a sight which no person that has seen it once, and possesses the feelings of a human creature, would choose to witness a second time. A troop of fugitives in full race from Ballina, women and children tumbling over one another to get into the castle, or into any house in the town where they might hope for a momentary shelter, continued for a painful length of time to give notice of the approach of an army.

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The rebels quitted their camp to occupy the rising ground close by the town, on the road to Ballina, posting themselves under the low stone walls on each side, in such a manner as enabled them with great advantage to take aim at the King's troops. They had a strong guard also on the other side of the town towards Foxford, having probably received intelligence, which was true, that General Trench had divided his forces at Crosmalina, and sent one part of them by a detour of three miles to intercept the fugitives that might take that course in their flight. This last detachment consisted chiefly of the Kerry militia, under the orders of Lieutenant Colonel Crosbie and Maurice Fitzgerald, the Knight of Kerry, their Colonel the Earl of Glandore attending the General. It is a circumstance, which ought never to be forgotten by the Loyalists of Killalla, that the Kerry militia were so wrought upon by the exhortations of those two spirited Officers to lose no time in coming to the relief of their perishing friends, that they appeared on the south side of the town at the same instant with their fellows on the opposite side, though they had a league more of road to perform.

The two divisions of the Royal army were supposed to make up about twelve hundred men, and they had five pieces of cannon. The number of

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rebels could not be ascertained. Many ran away before the engagement, while a very considerable number flocked into the town in the very heat of it, passing under the castle windows in view of the French Officers on horseback, and running upon death, with as little appearance of reflection or concern, as if they were hastening to a shew. About four hundred of these misguided men fell in the battle, and immediately after it. Whence it may be conjectured, that their entire number scarcely exceeded eight or nine hundred.

The whole scene passed in sight of the castle, and so near it, that the family could distinctly hear the balls whistling by their ears. Mr. Fortescue very humanely took upon him the direction of the women and children, whom he placed as far as he could from the windows, and made them remain prostrate on the carpets till the business was quite over. He himself could not refrain from taking his stand at a window of the library looking seaward, which, with the other windows of that room, he had barricaded with beds, leaving room to peep over them. A malicious rascal in the seagrove observed his position, and calling to a woman in the road to stand out of his way till he should 'do for that tall fellow,' he discharged the contents of a carabine full at the window, with

such effect, that twelve slugs made as many holes in passing through the glass. The bed saved the lives of Mr. Fortescue and Henry Stock, the Bishop's son, who was standing behind : but two of the slugs were lodged in Mr. Fortescue's forehead, providentially without penetrating the bone, or hurting him materially, though one slug was not extracted till a considerable time afterward, when he reached Dublin.

The Bishop saw the action from behind the breast of a chimney, where he could only be reached by an oblique chance shot. Curiosity, and the interest we all felt in the event, prompted every man in the house to expose his person by creeping to the windows. Our French officers thought it their duty to lead the rebels, as many as they could bring forward to the onset, though they were sure it was in vain, and had avowed to us their determination to surrender to the very superior force that was coming against them.

We kept our eyes on the rebels, who seemed to be posted with so much advantage behind the stone walls that lined the road. They levelled their pieces, fired very deliberately from each side on the advancing enemy, yet (strange to tell !) were able only to kill one man, a corporal, and wound one common soldier. Their shot, in general,

neral, went over the heads of their opponents. A regiment of Highlanders (Fraser's Fencibles) filed off to right and left, to flank the fusileers behind the hedges and walls; they had a marshy ground on the left to surmount before they could come upon their object, which occasioned some delay, but at length they reached them, and made sad havock among them. Then followed the Queen's County Militia and the Downshire, which last regiment had a great share in the honour of the day.

After a resistance of about twenty minutes, the rebels began to fly in all directions, and were pursued by the Roxburgh cavalry into the town in full cry. This was not agreeable to military practice, according to which it is usual to commit the assault of a town to the infantry; but here the General wisely reversed the mode, in order to prevent the rebels, by a rapid pursuit, from taking shelter in the houses of the townsfolk, a circumstance which was likely to provoke indiscriminate slaughter and pillage. The measure was attended with the desired success. A considerable number was cut down in the streets, and of the remainder but a few were able to escape into the houses, being either pushed through the town till they fell in with the Kerry from Crosmalina, or obliged to take to the shore, where it winds round a promontory

montory forming one of the horns of the bay of Killalla. And here too the fugitives were swept away by scores, a cannon being placed on the opposite side of the bay, which did great execution.

Some of the defeated rebels, however, did force their way into houses, and by consequence brought mischief upon the innocent inhabitants, without benefit to themselves. The first house, after passing the Bishop's, is that of Mr. William Kirkwood, the magistrate so often mentioned. Its situation exposed it on this occasion to peculiar danger, as it fronts the main street, which was raked entirely by a line of fire. A flying rebel had burst through the door, followed by six or seven soldiers: they poured a volley of musquetry after him, that proved fatal to Mr. Andrew Kirkwood, a most loyal and respectable citizen, while he was rejoicing at the victory, and in the very act of shouting out, 'God save the King.' Presentiments, as they are called, of evil should be resisted, for they often work their own accomplishment. This poor man, though nobody wished more ardently than he did to see the town recovered from the rebels, had taken up a strong persuasion that he should not outlive that event. Of course, he grew more restless every hour, in proportion as the

the time of the conflict drew nigh. The whole evening before, he continued to importune his wife with directions how he would have his family concerns disposed ; and when the firing began, he could not contain himself in his own house, where he had the best chance of remaining safe, and where those who stayed received no hurt, but removed to the very insecure dwelling of his kinsman : here he met his fate, in the manner related, by a ball though the brain. A purse of guineas, which, with the inconsistency of a distracted mind, he had stowed into his pocket though he expected death, disappeared, while they were moving his body from the passage into the kitchen.

In spite of the exertions of the General and his officers, the town exhibited almost all the marks of a place taken by storm. Some houses were perforated like a riddle, most of them had their doors and windows destroyed, the trembling inhabitants scarcely escaping with life by lying prostrate on the floor as at the castle. Nor was it till the close of the next day, that our ears were relieved from the horrid sound of musquets discharged every minute at flying and powerless rebels. The plague of war so often visits the world, that we are apt to listen to any description of it with the indifference of satiety: it is actual inspection

spection only, that shows the monster in its proper and full deformity.

When the army was beginning to move from Crosmalina, they passed by a wounded man lying at the road side, bleeding to death by a dreadful cut across the face, and to appearance expiring. Not a few stopt to look at him, and remarked that it would be an act of charity to put him out of his pain by dispatching him; but nobody had the heart to do it. After all had passed him, Arthur Stock, the Bishop's son, who brought up the rear, looking back saw the poor creature lift up his hands in a despairing manner, as if he complained of them for not terminating his misery. Familiarity with scenes of this kind blunts and overcomes the instincts of our nature; and it is necessary for the common safety, that in some breasts they should be overcome. But it would be well if the thoughtless multitude, who are so ready to rush into civil war, could have an insight from time to time into its sanguinary effects.

What heart can forget the impression it has received from the glance of a fellow-creature pleading for his life, with a crowd of bayonets at his breast? The eye of Demosthenes never emitted so penetrating a beam, in his most enraptured flight of oratory. Such a man was dragged before

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the Bishop on the day after the battle, while the hand of slaughter was still in pursuit of unresisting peasants through the town. In the agonies of terror the prisoner thought to save his life by crying out, 'that he was known to the Bishop,' Alas! the Bishop knew him not; neither did he look like a good man. But the arms and the whole body of the person to whom he flew for protection were over him immediately. Memory suggested rapidly—

'*What a piece of workmanship is man! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!*—*

'And you are going to deface this admirable work.' As indeed they did. For though the soldiers promised to let the unfortunate man remain in custody till he should have a trial, yet when they found he was not known, they pulled him out of the court-yard, as soon as the Bishop's back was turned, and shot him at the gate.

As soon as matters had been brought to the decision of the sword, the friends of Government had little cause to be apprehensive for themselves; but their fears were justly awake for the condition in which they might possibly find those of their own party at Killalla. 'Is the Bishop alive? are 'his family unhurt?' These were the first ques-

* *Hamlet.*

tions

tions that were asked by every officer as he came up to the castle gate, and with an earnestness that warmed the hearts of those that heard them. That amiable Nobleman, the Earl of Portarlington, Colonel of the Queen's County Militia (who has since paid, alas! the forfeit of a most valuable life to exertions beyond his strength in suppressing the rebellion) when he was told the Bishop was safe, exclaimed with clasped hands, 'God be praised!' and continued his pursuit of the rebels, so that the Bishop never had the opportunity of thanking his Lordship for his kindness to one almost a stranger to him. In the troop of horse, that swept the rebels before them into the town, was Arthur Stock, armed only with a sabre, and in an old red jacket quite too large for him. The humanity of General Trench had provided this mode of conveying him to us from Castlebar, as the safest he could contrive for him. With a breathless impatience the poor youth threw himself from his horse at the gate to ask the question that Joseph puts to his brethren, *Doth my father yet live?* It was a tender scene; for every body was eager to press to his bosom an adventurer of sixteen years, who had suffered so much hardship. He had been in the action at Castlebar, where the pikemen under O'Keon were put to the rout; and he had passed the

the last night under so heavy a rain, that he was compelled after some time to take off all his clothes, and make his bed of wet straw on the floor of a cabin. A slight disorder was the consequence, which happily soon went off.

Charost expressed as much joy at seeing Arthur safe, as if he had himself been one of the family. Yet the poor Commandant had no reason to be pleased at the treatment he had received immediately after the action. He had returned to the castle for his sabre, and advanced with it to the gate, in order to deliver it up to some English officer, when it was seized and forced from his hand by a common soldier of Fraser's. He came in, got another sword, which he surrendered to an officer, and turned to re-enter the hall. At this moment a second Highlander burst through the gate, in spite of the centinel placed there by the General, and fired at the Commandant, with an aim that was near proving fatal; for the ball passed under his arm, piercing a very thick door entirely through, and lodging in the jamb. Had we lost the worthy man by such an accident, his death would have spoiled the whole relish of our present enjoyment. He complained, and received an apology for the soldier's behaviour from his officer. Leave was immediately granted to the three French officers

officers to keep their swords, their effects, and even their bed-chamber in the house. But the Bishop found a difficulty to obtain the same indulgence for O'Keon, whose plea that he was a naturalized Frenchman, was pretty generally disregarded, and himself considered as an Irish rebel, to be speedily brought before a Court-Martial. However, at last they were all allowed to be kept together, including their cannoneer, and a little French servant of O'Keon's, till the following day.

General Trench was received by the Bishop and his family, in the lobby, with a welcome, of the sincerity of which there could be very little doubt. He expressed, in very polite terms, his satisfaction at the deliverance of this family from so great a peril as had hung over us for the last month; adding, that he had not failed to use every exertion to come to our relief, from the moment that our embassy had fully apprised him of our distressful situation. He then presented to the Bishop his principal officers, with some of whom he was previously well acquainted, particularly his much valued college intimate, the Earl of Glandore. Lieutenant-Colonel Crosbie, Major Fitzgerald (commonly called the Knight of Kerry,) Major Trench, brother to the General, his nephew

and Aide-de-Camp, Major Taylor; Major Acheson, son to Lord Gosford, Colonel Fraser, Major M'Donald, Captain Harrison, the Commissary, Colonel Jackson, and some officers of the county Militia, as Mr. Ormesby, Mr. Orme, and others, paid their compliments of congratulation, and were accommodated by the Bishop in the best manner he was able. Bed and board was provided for five resident officers, and occasionally every day for some others.

The Commandant and his party were ordered away on Tuesday, to Castlebar, with the Kerry regiment. Horses were found, not without difficulty, to convey their persons: the bulk of their effects was forwarded to them, on their arrival in Dublin, by the Bishop. We parted, not without tears, with our friends and protectors. The good-natured Reader will doubtless share in the pleasure, with which we record the notice that was taken every where of our French officers, for the part they had acted at Killalla. Our Government was pleased to forward them presently to London, giving them what money they wanted, for their draft on the Commissary of Prisoners, Niou; so that, passing but two or three days in Dublin, they could dine but twice with the Bishop's connections, my Lord Primate making them partake

of

of his hospitality one day, and Alderman Kirkpatrick another. From London, the Bishop had a letter from the Committee for taking care of French prisoners, desiring to be informed in what manner he, and his, had been treated by the French officers; and, on the Bishop's report, an order was obtained, that Citizens Charost, Boudet, and Ponson, should be set at liberty, and sent home without exchange.* They overtook their General at Dover; who was so sensible of the attention shewn to his officers, that he wrote to the Bishop the letter, of which a translation appeared in the Dublin Journal, and since, in the narrative published by Jones. The original will be found in our Appendix.

The week that followed the battle was employed in Courts-Martial in the morning, and in most crowded dinners at the castle in the evening. A whole bullock was consumed in two days, as the Bishop had not less than forty people to feed,

* Niou, the French Commissary, refused on the part of his Government, to accept of this mark of respect from our Ministry. 'The Directory could not avail themselves of so polite 'an offer, because their officers at Killalla had only done their 'duty, and no more than what any Frenchman would have done 'in the same situation.' It will depend on the particular temper of the critic, whether he shall call this answer magnanimous, or a childish gasconade.

besides the officers, and the principals of his own houshold. General Trench did his best to help out the mess, sharing his bread and fuel with us, and supplying us with beef when he could get it. Mr. Denis Browne, Lord Altamont's brother, sent the General at one time a whole, and again half a buck, desiring, in return, an immediate remittance of three hundred men to drive away the rebels from Westport. Whether the party went, I did not hear: the venison deserved it. Our greatest want was wine and groceries. A large order was sent to Sligo by the Commissary of Stores and the Bishop; but the sloop could not sail for some time on account of the equinoctial storms. The officers made out their entertainment as they could, with great patience and cheerfulness, being very pleasant, agreeable men, and the General extremely so. The French had made the Bishop a present of seven barrels of flour brought from their own country, which had been very good, but was a little heated in the voyage: this, made into what is called slim cakes served tolerably well for bread, as there was neither brewing for some time, nor barm. The sloop did not arrive to our relief till after the General was gone.

If the people of Killalla were distressed to find ccommodation for the multitude of officers that

now

now poured in upon them, they experienced yet greater inconvenience from the predatory habits of the soldiery. The regiments that came to their assistance, being all militia, seemed to think they had a right to take the property they had been the means of preserving, and to use it as their own, whenever they stood in need of it. Their rapacity differed in no other respect from that of the rebels, except that they seized upon things with somewhat less of ceremony or excuse, and that his Majesty's soldiers were incomparably superior to the Irish traitors in dexterity at stealing. In consequence, the town very soon grew weary of their guests, and were glad to see them marched off to other quarters. It is but justice to the regiment that has remained at Killalla ever since, the Prince of Wales's Fencibles, to acknowledge, that they have always behaved themselves with the greatest propriety, under the orders of those two excellent officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Macartney and Major Winstanley. Let it be remembered also, to the honour of our excellent Chief Governor, that as soon as the country was reduced to quiet, Marquis Cornwallis sent two Commissioners to Killalla and its vicinity, for the express purpose of ascertaining the damages done by the King's troops, and that, in March following, all authen-

ticated claims on that account were discharged in full by an order on the national bank.

The court-martial began the day after the battle, and sat in the house of Mr. Morrison. Their proceedings at first appeared extremely slow, considering the multitudes they had to try, not less than seventy-five prisoners at Killalla, and a hundred and ten at Ballina, besides those who might be brought in daily. The two first persons tried at this tribunal were General Bellew and Mr. Rickard Bourke, who have been already inrtoduced to the acquaintance of the reader. The latter, after exerting his best endeavours to prolong the contest with the King's troops, had imitated the craft sometimes observable in the fox; he had slipt in with the crowd of loyalists, and was found, with every appearance of a peaceable subject, sitting in the Bishop's lobby, and chatting familiarly with different people as they entered, till he was recognized and taken into custody by Mr. Ormsby. The trial of these two criminals was short. They were found guilty on Monday evening, and hanged the next morning in the park behind the castle. Contemptible for drunkenness and vulgar manners, they fell without exciting a sentiment of compassion.

Roger

Roger Macguire, our late Ambassador to Castlebar, occasioned some delay. It was urged in his favour, particularly by dean Thompson, that in their late journey he had often heard him speak to the people in favour of pacific measures, and of lenity to the protestants. On the other hand General Trench and his officers could not readily forget the insolent behaviour of this young fellow at Castlebar, under which assumed carriage he strove to conceal his apprehension of danger, when he was so grievously (and indeed so inconsiderately) threatened by Mr. Denis Browne and others, on his entering the town, as we have already observed. After a long imprisonment at Killalla, Macguire was transmitted to Castlebar, where at last he received sentence to be transported to Botany-bay. His father, the brewer, was hanged: his brothers, more active in treason and mischief than himself, have not yet been taken.

Broken weather increased the difficulty of keeping a force together in such a place as Killalla, their tents affording a poor shelter against the rain and storms of this season of the year. General Trench therefore made haste to clear the wild districts of the Laggan and Erris by pushing detachments into each, who were able to do little more than to burn a number of cabins; for the people had too many hiding places to be easily overtaken.

overtaken. Enough however was effected to impress upon the minds of the sufferers a conviction, that joining with the enemies of their country against their lawful sovereign was not a matter of so little moment as they had ignorantly imagined; and probably the memory of what they now endured will not be effaced for years. There are, I know, who think differently; who say these mountaineers will be always ripe for insurrection, and who urge in proof the mischief they have done very lately by robbery and houghing of cattle. Yet surely our common nature will incline us to make some concession to the feelings of men driven, though by their own fault, from their farms and their dwellings, wretched dwellings to be sure, but to them—(that poor fellow's lesson to the Bishop * is worth remembering!) to them as valuable as to the grandee his palace. Let a man look round from the summit of one of those mountains that guard our island against the incursions of the Atlantic, and say what he should think of passing a winter among them without the covering of a hut.

The disposal of the powder left at the castle by the French was one of the first things that occupied the attention of General Trench; especi-

* Page 110.

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ally after the accident, mentioned above, had made every body sensible of the necessity of speedily removing it. He wrote that very day to Government, and desired to have his Excellency's commands respecting it: yet the carriages did not arrive for transporting it to Athlone till the fifth of October, probably from the difficulty of procuring the means of conveyance at that season. The Bishop was heartily glad to be rid of this deposit, if that might be so named, which was placed in his hands against his will and consent. The French, as the reader will see by the annexed affidavit of Captain Bull, took it into their heads to be angry with the Bishop for betraying their powder to the King's officer; as if he owed *them* allegiance, or was responsible for a trust he had not undertaken, and which he would have rejected with abhorrence. All the share he had in saving this powder for his Majesty's use consisted in suggesting to the Commandant the real and absolute impossibility of throwing it into the sea, in the presence of people who waited eagerly and continually to seize it for their own destructive purposes. The powder, though coarse, was said to be good enough for use: the whole, at one shilling the pound, must have been worth upwards of 1300l. sterling.

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On the 29th, an address was presented to General Trench from the barony of Tyrawley, thanking him and his army for the good service of Sunday last, to which a polite answer was presently returned by the General. They have appeared in the publick prints.

The opportunity of an escort to Castlebar carried away from us this day our worthy friends, the Thompsons, with their three boys and a girl, a family whose real value we should hardly have known but for our captivity. Mr. Fortescue embraced the same opportunity. And the succeeding day, by the departure of General Trench with the Kerry officers to Castlebar, left the town of Killalla to the defence of the Prince of Wales' fencibles, who have remained there ever since. The detachment that had been sent into Erris on the 30th September returned the seventh of the following month, after suffering and inflicting a good deal of misery.

As the storm of war seemed now to have spent its force, the Bishop began to try what he could do in order to render his situation at Killalla easy at least, if he could not restore the comfortable posture in which the invasion found him. His greatest inconvenience was, that it was out of his power, as matters stood, to return to the exclusive

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use of his own house. The guard, which was relieved every day, being stationed in one of the offices at the castle, it became a duty of common politeness to offer a bed to the officer that commanded the guard. The same compliment could hardly be refused to another officer of the regiment, who coming later than the rest to Killalla, could not possibly find a lodging in the town. And these two officers naturally grew to be messmates in the family, the Bishop wishing by every means in his power to shew his sense of the protection afforded to the town by his Majesty's army. But the labour and weariness of living thus in a manner in publick, and for a constancy, may be easily conceived, at least it need not be described to any man that is fond of retirement and study. The messing indeed was laid aside, from the moment the gentlemen were aware of the Bishop's inability to bear the annoyance of continual publick dinners: but the bedchambers could not be refused; a circumstance which precluded the exercise of hospitality towards the Bishop's friends or his clergy, his own family being so numerous. Neither was it by any means clear to the people of Killalla, if they set themselves to repair the damages they had sustained by the war, that they would be able to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

The

The winter was coming on; a multitude of rebels were scattered through the mountains, likely to be rendered desperate by want; and perhaps too the French might find means to effect another and a more powerful invasion in the same place where they had landed before.

These reasons were repeatedly urged to the Bishop by his friends in the capital, to induce him to remove with his family thither without delay: but he had fixed his resolution to remain where he was for that winter. After the losses he had sustained, his circumstances stood in the way of an expensive journey to Dublin: and if that had not been the case, he found by many trials, that his presence was likely to be useful to his country neighbours, either in assisting to obtain compensation for them, or clearing them from ill-founded charges of disaffection. From the rebels in the mountains he apprehended no danger, as long as the military were left to protect the town; and as to another attempt from the French in the very same quarter, and on the verge of winter, it was an event too far removed from probability to be a reasonable ground for retreating.

But experience quickly proved, that what is not probable may nevertheless be very true. On the morning of the 27th of October, 1798, three of

the same frigates which had brought over Humbert's army in August, in company with a fourth, carrying all together 2000 land forces, anchored in the bay of Killalla, precisely in the spot where they had made good their first landing. They formed a part of the armament, which, so happily for Ireland and the British empire, was destroyed by the glorious action off Rutland under the auspices of Sir John B. Warren. The alarm was taken, the moment these ships appeared; for our late sufferings had taught us what might be expected from vessels of that size. Two Officers of the Prince of Wales's, Captain Bull and Lieutenant Leurry, were sent at different times by Major Winstanley, to inquire what they were, and if friends, to deliver dispatches which had just come down to him from the capital. A party under the orders of Captain Fraser went to take their station behind Kilcummin head, under which the ships were moored, about a league from Killalla, to watch and make reports.

The Officers not returning in the time expected, the panic became universal. Every male inhabitant in the place crowded to Steeple-hill, anxiously looking out to the ships, and forming conjectures. An old Sailor, who had often seen the like, pronounced them to be French by their white sails,

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and by their seeming to stand out of the water more than ours. At length a yeoman horseman appeared on the opposite hill, coming down in full gallop. To the spectators his out-stretched arms told the bad news even before his words: 'Captain 'Fraser had bid him say to the Major, the ships 'were certainly French, and the enemy was land-'ing.' It was discovered, after the fright was passed, that this pestilent fellow had truly reported only half his message; for he was charged to say, 'the enemy was *not yet* landed.' But either his wits were unsettled by terror, or he was carried away by the passion men feel for relating marvellous news, let it be ever so horrible.

In half an hour, the town of Killalla had scarcely an inhabitant left, except the Military. The occasion was so instant, that every body was in motion before they had time to reflect how they should go, or whether they ought to go at all: for the weather was cold and stormy, the road to the next town (Ballina) deep mud, especially near Killalla, and the last invasion had left to very few any other means of conveyance but their feet. On foot the Bishop set out at the head of his whole household, except two sons who staid to preserve their father's property as long as they could. Two little daughters by his side waded through the

dirt. The other children got upon cars, with their mother and aunt, invalids, that had not been exposed to the air for the last two months; and one of them, Mrs. Stock, liable on any cold to a sudden attack of the gout in her stomach, which had more than once threatened her existence. While they were on the road, gusts of wind, and at last a heavy shower of hail, fell on them. All seemed to the Bishop to be now over. He must expect to lose the mother of such a family, the companion with whom he had passed twenty years of his life in the sunshine of a most perfect agreement, a sunshine absolutely uninterrupted by one transient cloud. He saw it, almost without a reflection. There is a pause of mind on the apprehended explosion of some enormous mischief, resembling the stillness that fills the horizon before a thunder clap. At intervals—when thought returned—what he was able to do he did. He raised his eyes, and adored in silence the uplifted hand of the Almighty. That hand, as he had soon the happiness to experience, was lifted, not to destroy, but to save.

The procession reached Ballina about six in the evening, after a march of two hours, in the course of which they passed the Armagh militia, hastening to Killalla to join the Prince of Wales's. And

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here the Bishop and his family were much indebted to the hospitality of Brigade-major Cunningham and his lady, that they did not suffer more by so unseasonable a flight. The house in which the Major resided was Colonel King's, in happier times one of the best and most comfortable dwellings in the whole country; but it had suffered so much damage in the Rebellion, when it was occupied by Truc, that it was now no easy matter to find a warm seat in it, scarcely a window being without one or more broken panes of glass, and a furious wind pervading the whole house. However, the entire groupe of fugitives had got into bed, when at midnight an Express came to the Major from Killalla, with intelligence, which that good-natured Officer thought his guests would be glad to hear immediately, though they were awaked out of their sleep for it. Major Winstanley had sent word, that the French frigates had suddenly slipt their cables, and withdrawn from our bay.

The two Officers that were carried off by this squadron to France, Messrs. Bull and Leurry, found their way back again to their regiment near four months afterwards. From their report it appears, that a cutter they had on the watch having apprised the enemy that an English squadron was heaving

heaving in sight, for which they were conscious they were not a match, they made off to sea, with so much precipitation, that the largest frigate cut her cable, leaving an anchor behind her, which is thought to be very well worth the weighing up. The squadron was close pursued by two line of battle ships, the Cæsar and the Tremendous (as report said) even to the distance of ninety leagues, and had for a considerable time very little hope of an escape, though they at last effected it by throwing every thing they could spare overboard, and thus outsailing ships that were crippled in the late action with the Hoche and others.

Next day with joyful hearts all the inhabitants of Killalla returned home, where no mischief had happened during their short absence. By the good providence of God the ladies of the Bishop's family escaped the danger to their health, of which they had so much reason to be apprehensive; nor did any of the children take cold, except one little girl that walked, who had a low fever in consequence, which did not quit her for three weeks.

After this alarm, there was no resisting the importunity of the Bishop's friends, recalling him to Dublin. To stay longer in a post of so much danger was generally pronounced to be a tempting of Providence. Their arguments would have carried

irresistible weight (had a further weight been necessary,) if the Bishop or his friends had then been in possession of the intelligence, which they have since received from Captain Bull, whose testimony is here laid before the Reader.

" Captain Joseph Bull, of the Prince of Wales's Fencible Infantry, who was taken Prisoner by the fleet in Killalla bay, being sent out with dispatches by order of the Commanding Officer, maketh oath and saith :

" That on his being taken on board, and during his voyage to France in La Concorde French frigate, he was often told by most of the Officers on board, both naval and military, that had they landed their troops when they appeared in the bay of Killalla on the 27th of October, they had the most positive orders to send the Bishop of Killalla and his family immediately Prisoners to France.

" That on his (Captain Bull's) asking them the reason of this step, their answer was, that the Bishop had betrayed the town to the King's troops, and had likewise delivered up the ammunition that was brought in by the French during the time they were in possession of the town of Killalla.

" Captain Bull further says, he took every step that he thought was likely to prove this report entirely groundless, but is sorry to say, without effect. And says, that had they met with any opposition in landing, their determination was, to lay the town in ashes.

" Sworn before me at Killalla, March 1, 1799.

WILLIAM KIRKWOOD."

Joseph Bull, Captain of
the Prince of Wales's
Fencible Regiment.

The public is also here presented with the original letter of General Humbert, of which a translation was given in Jones's last Narrative of the Rebellion ;

" Le General Humbert.

" A Milord l'Eveque de Killalla.

" Douvres, le 26 Octobre, 1798.

" Milord,

" Etant sur le point de rentrer en France, je dois vous témoigner les sentimens distingués que vous m' avez toûjours inspiré. Après avoir eu l'avantage de vous connoître, j'ai toûjours regretté que le hasard et mon devoir de

 militaire

militaire m'aient obligé, en portant le fléau de la guerre dans votre voisinage, à troubler le bonheur domestique dont vous jouïssiez, et que vous meritez à tous les égards. Trop heureux, si en rentrant dans ma patrie, je puis me flatter d'avoir acquis quelques tîtres à votre estime. Indépendamment des raisons particulieres que j'ai pour vous aimer et vous estimer, le tableau que le citoyen Charost me trace de toutes vos bontés pour lui et ses officiers, tant avant qu' après la reddition de Killalla, sera pour moi un tître éternel d'estime et de reconnoissance.

" Je vous prie, Milord, d'en accepter l'expression, et d'en faire part à votre estimable famille.

" Je suis, avec la plus haute estime,

" Milord,

" Votres très humble serviteur,

" HUMBERT."

FINIS.

[Printed by H. Baldwin and Son, New Bridge-street, London.]